

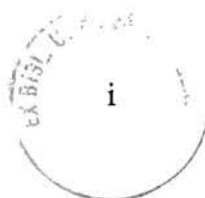
**Containing the Crisis : Spatial Strategies and the  
Scottish Prison System**

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## **Declaration**

**I, Anna Ferrant, hereby declare that the work present herein is composed  
by me and is based upon my own research**

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## Abstract

This thesis sets out to access the views of prisoners and staff within six Scottish prisons in order to analyse the spatial manifestations of what I refer to as a 'crisis' in the penal system. This 'crisis' arises not simply from material or administrative factors, but prisoners' and officers' endeavours to produce and preserve their own identity; to legitimate their social statuses as 'prisoners' and 'officers' (using these stereotypical roles and associated behaviour to protect the 'self'); and to do this by asserting power and control over the spaces in which they live and work. A divergence of opinion between prisoners and staff arises as a result of the distinct differences between the stereotype 'prisoner' and 'officer' roles. The thesis explores the implications of this divergence for the use and manipulation of prison space both physically and psychologically. As a consequence of prisoners' and staff differences in attitudes to and experience and knowledge of prison life, particular meanings are attached to prison spaces, these meanings manipulating the manner in which these spaces are used and the social relations which develop within and through these spaces.

The thesis draws on a unique set of interviews with prisoners and staff in six Scottish prisons. The data show how the social and spatial strategies adopted by each group as a means of dealing with every day life in prison, undermines the quality of relations between officers and prisoners and so compromises the effectiveness of penal policy. Prisoners and officers possess different perceptions, experiences and interpretations of prison life and have different opinions about the character, quality and use of prison space. This divergence in opinions and the resultant consequences are illustrated with particular reference to the 'Sentence Planning' strategy.

'Sentence Planning' offers prisoners an opportunity progressively to reduce the distance between them and the outside world, and at the same time requires a reorientation of both prisoners' and officers' perceptions of one another. It also calls for an adjustment of their knowledge, experience and expectation of each group's behaviour. The data emphasises the need for penal policy-makers to familiarise themselves with the requirements and opinions of both prisoners and officers within individual establishments, to

ensure the development of good communication networks and social relations which are required for the successful implementation of future policy. The thesis will conclude by highlighting the need for a people-based approach, emphasising the role of human agency in shaping and manipulating the form penalty adopts within the actual prison establishments.

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### **List of Abbreviations**

**SPS:** Scottish Prison Service;

**YOI:** Young Offenders Institution;

**PO:** Prison Officer;

**P:** Prisoner.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Aims of the Thesis*

This thesis is about the 'crisis' in the Scottish prison system. It explores prisoners' and officers' views of, and contributions to, that crisis. It aims to initiate a new dialogue on the spaces of imprisonment by accessing the views of prisoners and officers (in the context of this study 'the other') on their experiences of prison environments and cultures. The study aims to specify the importance of the use of space and spatial strategies for studies of penalty and for the interpretation of historical developments in penal policy. The work attempts to evaluate the manner in which these spatial strategies directly affect the implementation of penal policy within prison establishments.

For the purposes of this study, the prison environment refers to the particular Scottish establishments examined and to the social relations operating within these environments. Any reference to the 'penal system' will imply all penal establishments, administration and resources as being part of a wider system of confinement and restriction of liberty in Scotland. The 'other' predominantly refers to those construed as being outside of normal everyday society - people, who, through their actions have been deemed threatening to the order of society and the laws of the land. The reaction by this society has been to confine and restrict; to remove their liberty, their privileges and access to their families and communities and to segregate them both socially (through a stripping of identity and stigmatisation) and spatially, in relation to confinement within a specific location and under a restrictive regime. I also include officers under this label 'other'. Officers are, by the nature of their work also restrained within the walls of the prison. They are employed in the prison system through choice, but have to operate within the confines of specific prison spaces and regimes. As authoritarian figures, they represent the guardians of society and the maintenance of law and order. I have therefore chosen to include officers under the label 'the other' as a means of emphasising the intrinsic nature of the prison social world (or culture) in terms of the manner in which it restricts, bounds, and permeates the roles, experiences, interpretations and knowledge of those who work and live

within it (and furthermore who themselves reproduce it through their absorption of its values).

When referring to a 'crisis' I am not claiming that the Scottish prison system is on the brink of a state of collapse. What I am emphasising is how disturbances (riots in the 1980's) and administrative unease (from new policies and market testing), have produced a situation where those people confined and employed by the prison system are unsure of its future, and of their present, in a system which is arriving at what Cavadino and Dignan refer to as a "critical juncture" (1992, p.10). There are two avenues down which the system can proceed - towards establishing a more humane form of punishment considerate of the needs, aspirations and experiences of prisoners and staff; or a continuation of the present situation where both prisoners and the authorities feel a need to be heard and taken account of and therefore constantly endeavour to legitimate their personal feelings and beliefs as a means of proving the inadequacies of the system to themselves and those in the wider society. My approach is therefore considerate of material factors (resources and space) and ideological forces (implementation of policies) as critical elements of this crisis, but it also emphasises the role of human agency simultaneously operating within and through these wider structures and forces. It thereby recognises the extent to which people, through their personal experiences and resultant interpretations and beliefs, can manipulate situations in which they find themselves.

This thesis is essentially a snapshot of the capabilities of individuals to assess and react to what they perceive as morally unjust. The study emphasises the role human agency plays in determining the outcome of institutional control by the authorities, through evaluation and assessment by each group of the 'other', and passive and active reactions of individual prisoners and staff across space and time to these assessments. In doing so, the thesis recognises the degree to which these feelings towards imprisonment for both prisoners and officers, are bound up with identification of the 'self' and of one's particular social group, as a method of survival in prison (the struggle to be an individual coexists with the need to be part of an homogenous group for reasons of survival and safety). These social (and therefore spatial) expressions of 'difference' prove to be divergent between groups (due to the

fact that prisoners are essentially confined against their will) and this produces a 'prisoner versus authority' situation where authority is identified with the staff - an immediate, identifiable 'opposite', the epitome of authority against which the moral indignation of the individual prisoner and/ or group of prisoners can be directed (and returned by staff to prisoners).

Throughout this project, I will extend the meanings of the 'other' to that of prisoners and staff. These groups exist side by side, restricted within their establishments by the overarching requirements of society. Together they experience and relate to the physical spaces of the prison, producing and reproducing, through their actions, experiences and thoughts, the social regulations under which they exist. They are essentially both restrained by the prison order and culture. As such, they manipulate the confines of the prison both physically and psychologically, as deemed necessary by their own need to exist and express their individuality. It is here that the essence of my thesis is based. The wider aim of this work is to initiate a new kind of dialogue for studies of penality - to emphasise the relevance of space to the management of prison life (both institutionally - by the authorities, and personally - by prisoners) and the implementation of penal policy within the Scottish prison system. I will establish how prison space is manipulated in this way as a means of maintaining a sense of personal and group identity as well as self-esteem for prisoners and officers. Furthermore, it is also used as a means to legitimate a sense of social status as human beings for prisoners and officers who are part of the wider society. I will examine the relevance this has for explaining what is referred to as a 'crisis' within the penal system - a complex situation, where a need to 'progress', and produce a more normalised environment with closer links to the outside spaces of the prison, is constricted by and contrary to the express needs, knowledge and experience of those at the frontier of the system (the officers and prisoners in the establishments).

### **Prisons, People, Space**

Prisoners are restrained within the walls of prisons. They are both physically and psychologically outside 'wider society'; not because they are unable to inter-relate with society, but because the perceptions of them by this society

restrict them from doing so. Officers work within the prison establishments as a matter of preference (for reasons of job security, salary and diversification of work). They nevertheless still have to operate within the physically and socially confined spaces of the prison. As representatives of discipline and order within the prisons, they are perceived by prisoners as the 'other' and, due to the reasons for prisoners being confined in prison, officers view prisoners in the same way.

In relating to the 'other' and more importantly and relevantly individuals who make up this 'other', I attempt to gain insight into prisoners' and officers' different experiences and perceptions of prison life and indeed to view them as intrinsic to the production of this 'crisis' within the prison system. I emphasise the extent to which the material and administrative factors do not fully justify this crisis. Such a crisis cannot be understood merely in relation to penal strategies and policies or resource allocation. I accept the fact that 'the crisis' is aided by an inherent lack of strategic direction and resources, but has also been fuelled by the need for identity by both prisoners and officers as to their roles and re-evaluation of their perceptions of one another. There is therefore a material and also a cultural dimension to this 'crisis'. While both explanations are necessary, neither is totally sufficient as an explanation unto itself. I explain how this crisis was initiated originally by the progression in the justifications for punishment and the shift towards a more normalised approach to penality, culminating in strategies such as 'Sentence Planning' and the assertion of the idea of the 'responsible' prisoner. Such a shift in ideology encouraged the need for a legitimisation of social standing by an individual (both prisoners and officers), and more importantly, an identity pertaining to that individual.

These changes in ideology towards the 'responsible prisoner' within a 'normalised' environment have had important implications for studies of penality. I will demonstrate how these shifts in thinking have required prisoners and officers to re-evaluate their perceptions and views of one another and to assert new identities. In relation to the studies of the effects of confinement on offenders, I will emphasise that it is unsatisfactory to accept the 'total stripping' of identity of an individual on entering prison (Goffman: 1968). This new approach to penality endorses the recognition of the prisoner

and officer as individuals. It recognises the existence and importance of prisoners' and officers' own experiences and need for identities, and essentially allows these identities to be acknowledged through the process of planning sentences and use of coping strategies in prison and working through problems face-to-face.

Such an approach has important implications for the previous development and understanding of the sociology of imprisonment, particularly some of the central explanations by Goffman as to the impact of imprisonment on inmates, particularly the mortification of the 'self'. In 'Asylums' (1968), he examines the curtailment of the 'self' through the process of entering an institution, breaking contacts with the past (role dispossession), admission procedures and programming where an individual is:

"shaped and coded into an object that can be fed into the administrative machinery of the establishment, to be worked on smoothly by routine operations" (p.26)

To a limited extent this mortification of the self may be viewed as being temporarily adopted by staff for prisoners through the total absorption of the role of 'gate-keeper' by officers as a means of maintaining authority. As Goffman (1968) indicates, both groups are not "passive recipients" of these stereotyped roles/ identities. They may be physically restricted and relieved of personal belongings, but their experiences and pasts remain - they are still individuals outside of the prison walls with families, friends and jobs. They do not lose their need for different identities. Indeed, as it will become apparent in Chapter VII, prisoners in particular require personal identities as a means to co-exist as individuals among other prisoners whom they would not necessarily choose to live with. They are merely forced to display more 'domestic' identities within the confines of the prison - more nuanced and subtle.

I will therefore emphasise how a shift towards a more humane rehabilitative form of imprisonment requires further recognition of the role an individual plays in prison, and the needs and requirements of that individual. Both prisoners and officers possess and attach their own views and meanings to what happens around them and to them. These interpretations are subject to



previous personal experiences within and without prison and more relevantly, to an individual's ability to cope in prison. I examine how prisoners psychologically manipulate their environment by drawing on their past experiences and knowledge and create a 'niche' (Toch: 1992) or personal microcosmic stress-free world in which they feel safe and secure and where a detailed knowledge of their surroundings produces a sense of security. It becomes evident how such physical and psychological manipulation of the culture and environment is a pre-requisite for survival. The need for a personal identity and social role by an individual (as well as a feeling of safety), is inter-related with this reproduction of space (the on-going reworking of micro-geographies in prison). As Canter (1977) states:

"The concept of self, then, that system of thoughts and experiences which enables us to regard ourselves as unique and to distinguish ourselves from others, is an integral aspect of the psychology of space....the definition of a person's identity, which in turn relates to the control he (sic) may keep over others and what is separate to himself, is closely tied to those places which are in some sense "private"...privacy becomes more than just a state; it becomes a state of balance in the process whereby particular places are thought of as being closely related to activities - activities which we regard as so intertwined with our self concept, that we wish to keep close control over their availability." (p.179-180)

My aim therefore, is to bring a human-geographical sensibility to bear on the studies of penal systems - to emphasise the significance of the meanings attached to spaces in prison and the impact such divergence of meaning (as established above) between the authorities and prisoners, have on their social relations and the manipulation of space by both prisoners and staff. Such an approach will emphasise the extent to which the imposition of structure or authority on prisoners is itself determined and legitimated by the actions of prisoners in a particular space and time. Authority and discipline are imposed and manipulated through the spaces of the prison, responding to social relations, human action and interpretation at the local level. It is therefore important to understand how human agency itself exists in relation to one or more 'structures' and how these 'structures' are formed by the actions of human agents. The prisoner who behaves in a manner which deviates from one normative structure (e.g. the prison regime rules), may be conforming to a different one (e.g. the prisoner social structure). Several

structures operate together at one time - it is the interpretation and experience of human agents and their associated actions which determine the reassertion of the structural boundaries.

This thesis therefore acknowledges how space in prison is manipulated both physically and psychologically by both groups in an attempt to achieve control over their social and physical situations. The need for autonomy (a sense of power and control over an individual's own existence and 'lived' and 'worked' spaces) in prison is paramount. The endeavours of prisoners and staff to gain such autonomy essentially proves to manipulate the original meanings attached to the spaces of the prison (through personal, authoritarian control and more relevantly, experiences of these spaces), thereby dictating the actual utilisation of these spaces. It will become apparent how such a utilisation of space, and therefore the divergence of interpretation of it by prisoners and staff, requires further analysis for the implementation of policy in Scottish prisons. The 'Sentence Planning' policy is examined in the light of these physical and psychological spatial strategies, emphasis being placed on the aim of this strategy to implement an ideology based upon the desire to achieve more equal and open social relations between prisoners and staff. Such an approach shifts emphasis towards a realisation of the need to account for the needs of the individual, his/her coping abilities, spatial survival techniques, and to appreciate the inherent differences in interpretation between prisoners and the authorities pertaining to the real trials of prison life. As such, 'Sentence Planning' has had a limited impact due to a lack of resources. However, in my opinion, this strategy may be viewed as a step in the right direction and one that heralds a new, fresh and more dynamic approach, considerate, and in recognition of the needs of both prisoners and staff at the frontier of the system.

## **Space**

It is important to appreciate what I am referring to when I mention the term 'space'. In the context of this thesis, I am concerned with four different, but interconnected forms of space: the material spaces of the prison, the social spaces, the symbolic spaces and the contextual spaces. If the imprisonment of offenders is to be managed effectively, if penal policy is to work, it is



important to appreciate and relate to the meanings attached to space in prison - to be concerned with not only its *quantity* but also with *quality*. This directs attention not only to the design, age and condition of the physical structure of the prisons but also the role of the individual officer and prisoner in manipulating and affecting the manner in which it is utilised to their own requirements (as well as the meanings attached to them).

[i] The Material Spaces - these refer to the buildings, corridors, galleries, cells, exercise zones, workplaces and dining facilities within the prison establishments. These spaces make up the very fabric of the prison and throughout the thesis I emphasise their significance to prisoners and staff. I refer to these spaces as 'prison space' or 'institutional space' and often, in the process, refer to more concrete and identifiable spaces in relation to actual sites, locations and establishments. It is these spaces which are most obviously recognised and manipulated by the authorities in trying to maintain social control in prisons. In practice, attempts have also been made to intervene in the meanings constituted for individuals and groups through social spaces (see below).

[ii] The Social Spaces - these arise from the tendency of particular groups of people within prisons - managers, officers, prisoners, as well as sub-groups within these basic groups, to share particular sets of meanings and to access shared clusters of privileges and obligations. Such groupings tend to occupy and move through different material spaces. Here then, I am referring to how material spaces, through being 'colonised' by society and its constituent groups, become social spaces. To some extent these social spaces are fixed by the very purpose and organisation of a prison - governors in offices, officers on landings and galleries, prisoners in cells. But there is a far more intricate process operating within these spaces, as different groups attempt to 'lay claim' to certain parts of the prison in a more informal manner. Different sets of prisoners may tend to congregate in different parts of the workshop for instance, or different grades of officer may tend to administer over different parts of the gallery. These social spaces are important because they exist as arenas where prisoners and officers interact (or not as the case may be) and consequently they symbolise places where social relations can or cannot

thrive, representing to prisoners and staff arenas of interaction or confrontation.

[iii] The Symbolic Spaces - these spaces overlap the material and social spaces explained above. They exist psychologically because certain sites, areas, etc. within prisons are invested with unique and heightened meanings by individuals and groups: individuals trying to carve out personal space by saying that a given cell or floor area is 'my home'; subgroups trying to project their identities into a spatialised form by saying that a given landing or staircase belongs to our 'gang'; even officers emphasising that this office, walkway or side of the gallery landing is 'staff space' where prisoners should not trespass. Here, I am referring to how the tangible spaces of the prison are imbued with intangible meanings, which are connected to the actions of individuals and groups as they stake out space in order to support, express and defend their personal and group identities (as well as their respective statuses and autonomies within a particular prison).

[iv] The Contextual Spaces - a final but all-encompassing reference to space is made in terms of the specificity of the location, place, region, country that a particular establishment or series of establishments are positioned within. Here, I offer a contextual explanation of space - one that is alert to the time-space specificity of the prison and/or the penal system under study. I emphasise the relevance of the geographical situation of the establishments and identify the differences and links between them in relation to the perceptions of both prisoners and the authorities. Recognition of the wider spatial context of imprisonment emphasises the need to remain alert to the differences, peculiarities, and anomalies of particular establishments, which are too easily missed by grand theoretical claims such as those made by reductionist Marxists or Humanists. Such context provides a reference for another use of space as a sub-set of this - the notion of a 'network' of prisons within a penal system, spread out across space (the territory of a nation - Scotland), connected together by flows of commands, information, personnel, resources and positioned in such a way as to provide the necessary facilities for the containment of offenders. The location of these establishments must also be viewed in terms of a wider control mechanism, implemented by the authorities to diffuse community fear and opposition of the proximity of

these institutions and furthermore, reduce the chances of prisoners joining forces in the events of mass break-outs. The manner in which these prisons are dispersed must also be recognised as relevant to the discussion of the use of space in relation to administrative issues, in that such a dispersal is itself related to the development of the penal system in Britain and more relevantly, Scotland through time. The politics and ideologies of the past have produced the location and architectural design of prison establishments today. The history of the development of internal and external prison spaces have important connotations for the social and spatial utilisation of prison space, and therefore the production of symbolic spaces through the meanings attached to them by prisoners and staff.

In the majority of cases where I refer to the spaces of the prison, I discuss those internal areas, within the prison walls. At times, I do however refer to the external spaces of the prison in terms of environmental, even landscape properties of these spaces. Such an approach is, as emphasised above, an attempt to widen the scope of the study and appreciate the impact of the 'strategies of the strong' (the authorities who are in ultimate control of the prison) and the 'tactics of the weak' (the prisoners who attempt to reassert a spatial and therefore social identity within the confinements of the prison).

But these forms of space do not merely exist on their own within the confines of the prison walls. They are not separate rooms in which prisoners and officers choose to exist. They inter-relate, interconnect and more importantly, develop through the policies, identities and social relations operating within and without the confines of the prison. The meanings attached to space are therefore constitutive of these identities and relations. Human agency operates through the confines of the physical spaces of the prison and at the same time develops and produces meanings and identities with these spaces. Prison space per se cannot be understood without these identities and social relations and yet it is the physical and psychological use of prison space which itself initiates these meanings.

This sensitivity to the geography of the prison is critical to an understanding of the development of social relations in prison, and at the same time these spaces are themselves constitutive of such relations. Such an approach

essentially requires attention to detail - emphasis on "the particular, the local, the specific" (Philo: 1991). It requires a shift away from steam-roller totalising historical accounts and modernist metanarratives, towards an understanding of difference and detail and an appreciation of how things happen differently in different places - sensitivity to the local, the social and subsequently a movement towards a post-modernist sensibility.

Through-out this thesis therefore, attention to differences between prison environments, regimes and individuality of prisoners and officers will be emphasised and more importantly used as a means to understand the impact of the physical and psychological uses of space on the intrinsic operations, regimes and structures of penal institutions at the local level. As Foucault indicates, attentiveness to the tangibility of these spaces of dispersion (of localities and the social relations operating within them and through them) is a determinant of the detail of the histories of social 'pathologies' (madness, criminality etc.) and of the institutions invented by society to deal with them (asylums, prisons etc.). The complexities of the macro and micro geographies of these institutions (their nearness or farness, and spatial arrangements within, emanating from their plans and architecture) are real and diverse, and it is within these spaces of dispersion that power, knowledge and human agency are produced and operate. Such policies, identities and relations can therefore not be substantiated without an awareness of diversity, locality and spatial dispersion.

The relevance of spatial dispersion is emphasised by Goffman in 'Asylums' (1961). He shows how the spatial curtailment for the prisoner, through the design of the institution is used as a barrier to the outside world creating a form of persistent tension between the home world and the institutional world. Spatial containment is thus used as "strategic leverage in the management of men" (p.24). Goffman highlights a variety of ways in which this tension is created between the internal and external spaces of the institution and constantly applied, the most important being the organisation of the institution around punishment and privilege. These modes of organisation are geared into a 'residential work system':

"Places to work and places to sleep become clearly defined as places where certain kinds and levels of privilege obtain, and inmates are

shifted very frequently and visibly from one place to another as the administrative device for giving them the punishment or reward their cooperativeness warrants. The inmates are moved, the system is not. We can therefore expect some spatial specialization, with one ward or hut acquiring the reputation of a punishment place for especially recalcitrant inmates, while certain guard assignments become recognised as punishments for staff.”(Goffman: 1961, p.53)

These privilege and punishment systems operate side by side with the mortifying processes described by Goffman (the breakdown of the ‘self’ through admission procedures and programming of the inmate on entrance to the institution) and are processes to which the inmate has to adapt physically and psychologically. Through this social and spatial segregation and imposition, individuals fraternise by “developing mutual support and common countermeasures in opposition to a system that has forced them into intimacy and into a single, equalitarian community of fate” (p.57). This fraternisation may be strong enough to support “brief gestures of anonymous or mass defiance. Examples are: slogan shouting, booing, tray thumping, mass food rejection, and minor sabotage” (p.59). Special solidarities may emanate from such tension in physically confined units (as in Peterhead and Shotts Unit). ‘Cliques’ can also develop, all of these social group formations being the outcome of the production and reproduction of individual’s ‘niches’ - spatially determined safety strategies, rules and identities by which prisoners choose to survive. As Goffman indicates, and as will be emphasised in Chapter VII, such solidarity and ‘niche’ creation among prisoners can “provide the base for concerted activity forbidden by the rules, and the staff may consciously try to hinder primary group formation” (p.60). It is the hindrance of these social formations which essentially reproduces the tension between the authorities and the prisoners, thereby reasserting the need for clear identification of social and spatial strategies for prisoners and therefore identification and recognition of the strategies of the officers. In this thesis, I explore the ways in which confrontation between prisoners and officers develops from these socio-spatial existence strategies. I examine the conflict of power relations within the prison establishments arising from differences between the strategies of the strong (the prison authorities) and the tactics of the weak (the prisoner).



## Strategies of the Strong, Tactics of the Weak

A key aspect of my argument relates to the power relations running in the prison between 'the strong' (the prison authorities and officers), and 'the weak' (the prisoners). I emphasise the significant schism between those who lock the doors and those who are locked in; between those with the 'legitimate' power to punish (and to use a measure of violence) and those with barely the most elemental rights of a citizen before the eyes of the law. I explore this schism in detail, notably by distinguishing the far-reaching abilities of the strong to create, regulate and 'police' the majority of prison spaces (institutional spaces) from the meagre abilities of the weak in their endeavours to gain some degree of individual autonomy and therefore control over smaller corners of prison space (personal spaces). On various occasions it is necessary to blur this strong/ weak distinction by stressing the vulnerability of officers at certain times (as discussed by Sykes: 1958), notably when they themselves feel poorly connected into the communication and information channels controlled from 'on high', and when making more general points about how a new culture of the prisoner as 'responsible' and being a 'consumer' can serve to undermine older regimes of iron-fisted authority (a similar outcome is examined by Jacobs: 1977). It is this vulnerability and need for legitimation of the 'self' by prisoners and officers which produces their need to develop identities and roles as part of the system and culture. I examine the manner in which individuals forge clear and separate identities - even if they are highly stereotypical identities of 'turnkey' and 'criminal' - which most individuals accept for most of the time, and even quite actively subscribe to. In a sense, these identities 'fix' the people concerned into set roles, carrying with them set attitudes and behaviour towards social relations between themselves and the 'other', into the spaces of the prison. It is necessary to realise how it does seem to serve the authorities well for these stereotypes to have a hegemonic power and to influence how people behave on a daily basis in prisons. As a consequence, attempts to resist the stereotypes are more likely to come from prisoners than from governors and officers.

An approach highlighting the actions of the strong and the weak presupposes the relevance of power relationships in prison. This thesis is a study of these

relationships - of how and why they are produced, manipulated and transformed within time and more relevantly, space. I study the extent to which the interpretation and experience of human agents causes the continual reassertion of the structural boundaries of the prison. In turn, these boundaries dictate daily life, but at the same time are manipulated by the power struggles between human agents.

This study is hence a snapshot of prison life, culture and social relations; what de Certeau refers to as a 'representation' (1984, p.35), which in itself develops from the "temporal articulation of places into a spatial sequence of points". He emphasises how such a study itself represents a 'flattening out' of points onto a graph - a functionalist administration of space, in order to make research effective and understandable. By widening the scope of this analysis, it becomes evident how this research in specific prison establishments is itself a spatial articulation of a functionalist administration of space in prison. It is here that de Certeau distinguishes between *strategies* and *tactics* :

"I call a *strategy* the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its own and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed" (p.36)

A *tactic* is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority, then, provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of the tactic is the space of the other....it is a manoeuvre "within the enemy's field of vision" as von Bulow put it and within enemy territory...It operates in isolated actions, blow by blow. It takes advantages of "opportunities" and depends on them, being without any base where it can stockpile its winnings, build up its own position, and plan raids.....It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the propriety powers." (p.37)

What de Certeau emphasises is how power is itself bound by its own inertia. The greater it becomes and therefore the more secure and control-oriented authority is, the less it is able to mobilise itself in the "service of deception". The weak however play on this, using myriad, tiny, fleeting, surprising

attacks and moves as a way of regaining a sense of control over the material and social spaces of the prison. Prison space thus symbolises an arena in which such demonstrations of power are carried out and where space itself becomes the 'prize' for the victorious. What is evident here is the relevance of the "mastery of places through sight" (p.36):

"To be able to see (far into the distance) is also to be able to predict, to run ahead of time by reading a space" (p.36).

A knowledge of what will happen ahead of time may be viewed as a form of power. The division of space allowed panoptic practice (where the surveillance of deviance was believed to provide the knowledge and therefore power to prevent it from reoccurring) to be implemented by the 'strong'. Here power was "visible and unverifiable" (Foucault: 1977, p.201). By placing the prisoner within the Panopticon shaped institution, the prisoner is:

"securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by the supervisor; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. He is seen but he does not see; he is the object in information, never a subject in communication." (p.200)

'Panopticism' and 'visibility' are therefore part and parcel of a discipline-mechanism. Functional in form, panopticism improves the exercise of power by making it "lighter, more rapid, more effective" (p.209). It is within this structural context that the weak are forced to exist and to carve out a survival technique and form of identity. In attempting to do so, these human agents manipulate their 'free places' as established by Goffman (1968, p.205), as a means of asserting a form of autonomy and clawing back the organised spaces controlled by authority for their own personal physical and symbolic use, reasserting the wider structural significance of the prisoner culture. As detailed in Chapter VI, prisoners use these 'free' spaces as a means of escaping surveillance and regaining privacy away from the 'madding crowd'. Because of the restrictive nature of imprisonment, many prisoners possess few places to escape to. As I will emphasise, the cell is the obvious hideaway; a personal place which they can identify with as their own and use to create their own identity (Canter: 1977).



Several prisoners also have the opportunity to use work and recreation spaces as refuge, this being dependent on the restrictions imposed upon prisoners by the authorities through the mechanism of categorisation. These tactics are certainly necessary to regain personal space. They are also used as a means to appropriate institutional space as *symbolic* space through demonstrations at appropriate times in halls, dining-rooms and chapels. Such tactics have important implications for the authorities in that they have often taken them by surprise, but furthermore have forced them to reorganise and structure their strategies. Thus both the strong and the weak are dependent upon one another for their own actions. They act in *response* to each other's needs as a means of asserting autonomy when perceived necessary within a particular time and space.

This thesis is therefore a signpost towards a more spatially aware and contextually sensitive study of penal systems. It is an examination of the interaction of individuals within the prison environment, encompassing an analysis of how these individuals relate to, manipulate and reproduce the physical and social environment for the purposes of creating a sense of security for the 'self' and challenging their fears in prison. But more importantly, it is an indicator of what policy-makers perhaps should be aiming towards - a more in-depth understanding of people (officers, prisoners, governors) and their experience and perceptions of the prison environment. A transactional approach is therefore required, attentive to the restrictions of the prison on an individual's self-assertion and esteem; recognising their need to reproduce an identity and existence within prison and being sensitive to the subsequent impact this has on the manner in which space in prison is utilised both psychologically and physically (and the resultant meanings attached to it in relation to institutional, personal and therefore symbolic space for both groups).

The aim of this thesis is not to produce grand theoretical statements about all aspects of the spatiality of all possible penal systems. Rather, I am reviewing new and exciting avenues of interpretation concerning the manipulation, experience, and contestation of prison space, primarily through detailed research on six Scottish prisons - and more particularly through the voices of individuals (staff and prisoners) caught up in these particular prisons. This

thesis is in essence, a contribution to the existing literature of human geography; an approach which I personally view as opening up new possibilities for a human-geographical study of penal systems and establishments - an extension of work on, and a point of contact with, the key areas of culture and social geography. First, research on the geographies of policing (the spatial aspects of law enforcement 'on the ground', the practices of police agencies relative to space, place, environment - work by Fyfe: 1989, 1994; Keith: 1988, 1993; Lowman 1986, 1989; Smith: 1986). Secondly, research on the historical geographies of social policy (on spatial aspects - locations, lay-outs - of various carceral and welfare institutions - see work by Driver 1990, 1993; Ogborn: 1993, Philo: 1989). These latter studies do make a careful examination of institutions with obvious similarities to prisons, but in doing so, tend to unpick the spatial strategies of the strong, adopting a Foucauldian perspective on the interweavings of power, knowledge and the spaces both around and within the institutions concerned. As such, their sensitivity to individuals (and their 'voices') within the institutions concerned is limited, and little therefore emerges about the spatial tactics of the weak and the impact of these tactics on the structural boundaries of the strong. This concept is developed by Sykes (1958), but is restrictive in the sense that he bases this analyses upon the stereotypical roles adopted by prisoners and officers. He fails to get beyond these roles or to examine why they are adopted by prisoners and officers and perceived as necessary at particular times and within particular places. My intention throughout this thesis is to highlight the degree to which the strong and weak are dependant upon one another to produce their strategies and tactics as a means to 'survive' the prison experience. I will emphasise the premise that, in responding to one another's actions spatially, both groups assert autonomy and produce identities by conforming to particular structures at particular times, thereby legitimating their own social statuses within the system as a whole.

The form of this thesis reflects the different meanings attached to the spaces of the prison, and the manner in which the material fabric of the prison represents both the personal and institutional and the social and the symbolic. The prison is not merely a void in which prisoners and officers co-exist, but a micro-cosmic environment produced by the social relations operating through the spaces of the prison. **Chapter One** outlines the theoretical

interpretations of penalty, identifying the importance of the role of human agency in the production of the 'crisis' in prisons and addressing the contributions of the Marxist, Humanist and sociological interpretations of penalty to a new geographically sensitive dialogue, as expressed in this thesis. **Chapter Two** provides the historical 'background' to the development of penal systems in Europe, Britain and Scotland. It introduces a sensitivity to the geography of penal systems, to differences in their operation between different countries and regions. It thus contextualises the experience of Scotland. In highlighting these background aspects, I consider the use of space in penal systems and individual prisons. I emphasise the extent to which the Scottish prison system may be viewed as being in 'crisis' and at a critical turning point in its development and stress the importance of the role of human agency operating within these spaces, manipulating and alleviating the current situation. **Chapter Three** details the practical, ethical and conceptual issues relating to the methodological approach to the project.

**Chapter Four** examines this crisis in relation to the strategies of the strong and the spatial organisation of prison buildings, activities, staff and prisoners (and notably their movements, encounters, contacts of these staff and prisoners). The chapter approaches the crisis principally from the view of the prison management and officers. In this chapter I analyse how prison spaces in Scotland are deliberately constructed and utilised by the 'authorities' to serve certain ends (of enforcing control and discipline, of securing the autonomy of the individual officers, of creating or disrupting social-communication networks within the prisoner population). Here I focus on the physical manipulation of prison spaces in the six case-study establishments.

**Chapter Five** presents an analysis of the psychological manipulation of prison space by the authorities through the administrative-spatial aspects of 'Sentence-Planning - a (post)modern form of social control involving a subtle command over communication (information flows, language forms) and identity (fragmenting prisoner group identities while playing up the dimensions of individual responsibility, attitude, ability to plan ahead, and ability to become a worthy citizen). Emphasis in the scheme is placed on recognising individuality of prisoners and exploiting the potential and ability of these individuals to shape and manipulate their development and

progression of their sentences through the penal system in a constructive and self-assertive manner. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the form 'Sentence Planning' adopts - to accentuate the manner in which the strategy identifies with prisoners as responsible individuals. I perceive this to be a move towards greater control of them and the spaces in which they exist and use to survive, and therefore emphasise how this is implemented by the fragmentation of the prisoner social group through encouraging prisoners to 'open up' to officers, specifically (Personal Officers) rather than fellow prisoners. Such an approach may be viewed as an attempt at controlling prisoners alone and therefore with greater ease. Due to the accompanying shift in emphasis towards a more attentive, listening role for both groups, 'Sentence Planning' has important implications for the development of social relations in prison. It determines the need for a reassertion of the role and expectations of the 'other' for both prisoners and staff. 'Knowledge' of the 'other' as 'different' and 'opposite' is required to be replaced by a more trusting approach from both sides. I examine the subsequent impact this strategy has on prisoners and officers within these establishments.

In **Chapters Six and Seven** I examine the spatial experiences and practices of individuals within the prison system, principally from the point of view of the prisoners (the 'weak') who are having a host of spatial (and other social) control strategies directed at them. In **Chapter Six** I focus on the prison spaces 'lived' by prisoners and the more 'passive' prisoner experiences of/ reactions to everyday prison life and spaces, notably the current prison 'crisis' and attempts by the authorities (the 'strong') to solve it. This chapter is essentially a snap-shot in time (and more importantly space) of the form that imprisonment in Scotland currently takes and an examination of the divergences in opinion between staff and prisoners at the frontier of the penal system.

**Chapter Seven** analyses the more 'active' uses of prison space which are made by prisoners seeking to retain and to carve out their own non-institutional identities (and also statuses in the local 'pecking orders' of the prisoner social hierarchy and based predominantly on the type of crime committed). I examine the coping and survival tactics of prisoners as bound up with the securing of safe havens, small territorial 'niches' (Toch: 1992) and

'free places' (Goffman: 1968). This chapter examines some of the ways in which prisoners manage to survive and maintain some form of personal identity and is therefore an account of how human agency (actions of the individual prisoner) manipulates the social and spatial environment for its own distinct existence.

**Chapter Eight** concludes by examining my key findings in relation to the practical policy initiatives in Scottish prisons. I emphasise the need for a person-responsive approach to penalty, one intent on accessing and interpreting the spaces, experiences and views of the 'strong' and the 'weak' and more importantly practically taking account of their responses.



## CHAPTER I

### *Theoretical Interpretations of Penalty*

The aim of this chapter is to examine existing interpretations of the development of the penal system. It will argue that some of these approaches are reductionist and based on a selective use of evidence. I suggest that in adopting grand ideas about the functioning of the penal system in the context of wider society, historical analyses tend to be sweeping and idealistic in form, restricted by the attempts of theorists to remain true to their own schools of belief. The imposition of the personal values and beliefs of the authors merely results in the suffocation of context, thereby confining the reader's understanding to snapshot accounts of a continual and basically homogeneous process through time and space. And it is this which formulates the crux of my argument; that there is a need to recognise the role of individuals at the frontier of the penal system: to take account of human agency within the locale, and therefore individual prisons, and realise the extent to which individuals are able to shape, and manipulate their lives through experience and interpretation within the bounded social, psychological and physical structure of these prison boundaries.

I shall review a broad cross-section of the literature in order to make the case that the role of human agency within particular locations (in this case, prison establishments), should be a key consideration when designing, implementing and evaluating penal policy. My review of the literature voyages from Marxism to Humanism and to the specific context of the sociological approach to imprisonment. My aim is to incorporate a definite sense and understanding of the role of creative human agency in the implementation and outcome of policy. My concern is how people both individually and collectively experience their worlds and arrive at interpretations of these worlds, and how they can act to shape and maybe radically change their circumstances and the structures which bear down upon them (and at the same time are actively determined by them). This trajectory ties up directly with the entire thesis, with its emphasis on the 'voices' of 'the other' in prisons (the people who are staff and, more

especially, prisoners), and with the notion that concrete policies are shaped and manipulated by individuals within the prisons.

But my review of theory, while far from exhaustive, is an attempt to do rather more than simply shift from Marxist to Humanist approaches. It is also designed to introduce other key themes of importance to this thesis: such as the extent to which 'structure-oriented' and 'agency-oriented' approaches can, to a certain extent be perceived as being complementary instead of totally competing (note I am not suggesting a resolution of the Marxist-Humanist dualism), and the ways in which an alertness to space (in various guises) can be detected in - elaborated from - the existing approaches to penalty. I will therefore structure this section as follows:

[i] a critical examination of Marxist approaches, objecting to their reductionism and failure to take people seriously. Valuable pointers will be highlighted in relation to how space is used as a control mechanism in the penal system;

[ii] a look at Foucault's approach to the subject of 'discipline and punish'; recognising it as emerging out of the Marxist-structuralist tradition, but as also 'attacking' reductive explanations of any sort. I will note how people start to feature in the analysis but less as creative human agents and more as 'things' to be moulded into 'docile dupes'. I will emphasise Foucault's general claims about 'spaces of dispersion' (the differences of the world which defy simple *a priori* theorisation) and discuss his specific claims about space, power and penalty (the point of departure of this study).

[iii] a brief analysis of Humanist(ic) approaches; applauding their imaginative recognition of particular people as being creative ('charismatic') and able to shape and manipulate wider structures, but emphasising how their practices must still be seen as constrained in various respects by economic and social structures. Such an approach suggests how this alertness to the creative propensity of particular individuals goes hand-in-glove with a sensitivity to spatial differences in 'outcomes' and to the particular spatial arenas ('places' or 'contexts') in which people act (negotiating their experiences, interpretations etc.).

[iv] an analysis of the sociology of imprisonment from a spatial perspective, detailing the relevance of an individualistic approach to the pains of confinement and highlighting the need to be sensitive to and aware of, the relevance of an individual's past experiences and related interpretations of his/her present on the manner in which he/ she survives the prison experience. This approach is developed more fully in Chapters VI and VII.

I approach this analysis from the viewpoint that the development of the penal system needs to be seen in relation to the political, social, moral and cultural values of a particular time and location, in a way that does not impose upon the evidence, discarding that which does not fit, and manipulating all available data to its own ends. For such a contextual approach to work, it is necessary to take into account a question of space - one that not only utilises evidence from a particular period in relation to the relevant mode of thinking for that period and location, but also brings the evidence into a spatial context, thereby signifying the relevance of processes at the ground level where punishment is actually taking place. Such an approach will invoke a better understanding of the manner in which particular social groups manipulate and are manipulated within the wider context of penalty. To ignore the spatiality of punishment is to interpret its development as structural and sequential (ignoring the local spaces, places and people punishment affects and is affected by), in relation to economic factors and social condemnation. Such an approach ignores the agents through which these wider structural forces are imposed and manipulated at the ground level. It ignores the 'spaces of dispersion' which exist as evidence of the continual process of the development of these structures through the social relations operating within the confines of the prison.

In essence what I will attempt to show is this: first, how it is necessary to develop a more sensitive understanding of the roles played by those people actually affected by and imposing punishment; second, that such punishment and discipline is itself only perceived and reacted to by particular individuals at specific times and within specific circumstances according to their own views, beliefs and past experiences. This may itself seem to be implying the need for a snapshot account of penalty in both time and space, in very



particular periods and locations (from which it is then difficult to offer generalisations) and indeed this cannot be refuted. What such an approach will attempt to do is to indicate how the development and causality of the penal system is socially and spatially manifest. It will show how punishment in prison is imposed through the physical and psychological organisation of space (through the imposition of material barriers and social relations between prisoners and the authorities). The aim of my approach will not be to restrict and contain the data, or to manipulate it to my own ends. I will use it in such a way that will produce a clearer understanding of the ways in which punishment has developed as an expression of the individual at particular times, (how structure has been determined by agency and through the actions of humans).

This thesis will explore how punishment has developed in particular spaces, subjected to meticulous structural constraints and the imposition of very different individuals' interpretations of particular situations. I will attempt to show how the development of the penal system has been manipulated (whether consciously or subconsciously) by individual prisoners' and prison officers' own experiences and beliefs. I will show how prison policy does not only impose constraint, but is itself subjected to constraint. This moves my interpretation towards a more pluralist account, one that views penalty as the interaction of the individual and the imposing ideology/ policy within a spatial frame and one that is expressed using space as its interpreter at the point of interaction.

### **Marxist Accounts and Beyond**

In my opinion, Marxist accounts of penalty have served to restrict and confine the historical data. Based on the premise that economics determines politics, ideology and law, various accounts have emerged, each attempting to explain the rise of different forms of punishment as a result of the demands of a capitalist system intent on producing profit and perpetuating the class system. Rushe and Kirchheimer in their book "Punishment and Social Structure" (1939) endorse this view by suggesting a relationship between the mode of production and the adoption of particular penalty measures, themselves oriented towards the control of crime, control of the lower classes

and an increase in productivity. Punishment is therefore seen as a social phenomenon driven by capitalist requirements.

To view the implementation of particular forms of punishment as being economically determined is to produce a rigid and restrictive analytical framework which fails to account for the manner in which economic forces manipulate but are also manipulated by social processes. Although the argument recognises the different and diverse social classes operating within the wider economic framework, consideration is limited to the manipulation of these groups by economic factors, thereby failing to account for these 'classes' as groups of human beings with their own experiences, interpretations and other ideological and social processes informing individuals and affecting their behaviour. Such an approach essentially denies the intentions of these individuals. As Cavadino and Dignan (1992) argue:

"Economic considerations are mediated through the minds of human beings who live in a social world, which means that the impact of economics is crucially conditioned by ideology." (p.62)

It would however be unfair to dismiss this approach purely on the basis of the manner in which Rusche and Kirchheimer develop an over-arching framework which fails to accommodate the complex processes involved in the articulation of particular modes of production and punishment. What they do manage to do successfully is to emphasise, if rather too strongly, the importance of economic conditions and of how penal policy is caught up in the divisions of social class. It is therefore important to appreciate the manner in which Rusche and Kirchheimer identify with the issue of space as an arena in and through which the authorities enforce control, and at the same time attempt to manipulate and to change the attitudes of prisoners through the implementation of regime, work and discipline. Rusche and Kirchheimer's achievement is to appreciate the relevance of space to the operation of penal policy. Their weakness is in maintaining that 'space' is economically determined - used to segregate and control social forces for capitalist gain<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Similar claims about spatial forms reflecting the needs of capitalist economic processes featured heavily in much early Marxist Geography (Harvey: 1973): it was this reductionist account of space that Soja revisited with the idea of the "socio-spatial dialectic" - an attempt at a more sophisticated Marxist account of socio-spatial relations. (Soja: 1985).

What is arguably necessary to develop these ideas, is an injection of Humanism. Antonio Gramsci, (1971), himself imprisoned, had already attempted to do this by re-establishing the importance of hegemony as an apparatus by which a ruling class ideologically dominates society. 'Consent' by the subordinate class was given equal priority as a mechanism allowing the ruling class to dominate and to enforce the reliance of the lower classes on them. Such an approach emphasises the relevance of a dialectical interaction between the economic sub-structure and social and ideological factors rather than one that implicates the economic sub-structure as a determinant of all social and ideological processes. In doing this, Gramsci implies that social classes were, in reality, groups of individual human beings sharing similar ideologies, rooted in similar economic positions. By doing this, he emphasised how social control mechanisms of the ruling class over the lower class were arenas of contestation and consent, in which authority was both manipulating and manipulated by both social groups.

It is evident from the Marxist tradition that space can be utilised as an important control mechanism - an economically determined and manipulative tool for those in authority. However this tradition gives only a limited indication of where these economic structures emanate from and pays limited attention to the possibility that structure can only exist through human agency (social relations).

Hay (1975) breaks through some of these limitations in his appreciation of the role of space and the relevance of human action on the imposition of law and order from the dominant classes. He emphasises how in the eighteenth century, the ruling class factions maintained their position by imposing discipline and obedience upon the lower classes through the organisation of penal ceremonies. Punishment was administered as spectacle - a show of power, authority and social class. Foucault (1977) made similar claims about such pre-modern terror-ific forms of power. Hay emphasises that these ceremonies were very much dependent on those who were administering the punishment. Mercy could often be granted when it suited, courts often acting as a selective instrument of justice. Deference, manipulation and nepotism were common. As Hay implies, the law was an ideological structure which

was social in appearance but very much class-oriented in effect. Although it is basically an economically deterministic explanation, Hay's line of thinking incorporates the idea of a society's culture at a particular time being regenerated through acts of symbolism and ritual display. In doing so, he widens the discussion of penalty by incorporating a spatial factor into his analysis, in order to take account of the extent to which punishment in a particular time and place is open to interpretation and influence by those imposing it, being affected by it and witnessing it. Social relations are seen to operate in accordance with economic and emotional factors at a particular place and time. Human beings are recognised as interpretative beings, interpreting the world around them for the benefit of their own immediate good, not necessarily as related to a capitalist perception of authority and class domination.

Ignatieff, in his book "A Just Measure of Pain" (1978), offers a similar approach in that he recognises the significance of particular individuals in the development of the penal system, emphasising how religious and utilitarian conformists (Howard, Fry and Bentham) operated and imposed their will upon the reform of the penal system in the early nineteenth century. But what he further establishes is how these individuals influenced penalty in a manner that served the political powers of the time. Britain was, at this time, experiencing a transition, restructuring itself in order to move forward to a new social order based upon productivity and class subordination. New and more effective methods of dealing with crime were therefore deemed necessary, such as the Penitentiary. This was a purpose built institution, whose principal objectives were:

"sobriety, cleanliness and medical assistance, by a regular series of labor, by solitary confinement during the intervals of work and by some religious instruction to preserve and amend the health of the unhappy offenders, to inure them to habits of industry, to guard them from pernicious company, to accustom them to serious reflection and to teach them both the principles and practice of every Christian and moral duty" (Blackstone: 1813 p.437).

This 'total institution' (Goffman: 1978) was the ultimate way of re-establishing authority. As Ignatieff illustrates:

“the reformers succeeded in presenting it as a response, not merely to crime, but to the whole social crisis of the period, and as part of a larger strategy of political, social and legal reform designed to re-establish order on a new foundation” (p.47).

The need for order therefore determined the development of a new approach to punishment in the early nineteenth century in Britain and beyond - one that relied on manipulation and coercion through employment and discipline within a confined space. Ignatieff subsequently emphasises how time (and the relevant cultural and social factors defining it) and space were utilised by those influential individuals to assert their personal ideals and to influence the development of the penal system as we know it today. Ignatieff thereby highlights the relevance of human interpretation and manipulation within the wider economic and hierarchical order.

Such an account does, however, have its own obvious misconceptions as to the extent to which human action is determined by capitalist gain. In “Social Control and the State” (1985) Ignatieff goes some way in recognising these misconceptions and implies the need to :

“find a model of historical explanation which accounts for institutional change without imputing conspiratorial rationality to a ruling class, without reducing institutional development to a formless ad hoc adjustment to contingent crisis, and without assuming a hyper-idealist, all-triumphant humanitarian crusade” (p.77).

What Ignatieff argues here, is for an approach which places the development of the prison within the wider context of the judicial system, accounting for the way in which civil society as a whole determined and shaped the manner in which particular criminals were dealt with, whether by the State, or the local community. In widening the context, Ignatieff re-emphasises the importance of human action and interpretation on the execution of punishment. In doing this, he introduces a spatial element - one that is considerate of individuals living within particular communities and influencing the decision-making process in a manner in which they see fit. Human agency is therefore viewed as a catalyst to the production and continuation of structure. Therefore space is not only produced and utilised as a control mechanism. Ignatieff recognises how it also exists as an arena of



contestation between the authorities and those individuals which these spatial arrangements impose upon.

The above explanations of the development and execution of punishment tend to possess one contestable premise - that of the economy as completely and consistently manipulating human action. What I have hopefully emphasised in my discussion is the degree to which such an approach is inherently reductionist in form, defining human action and the spaces that human beings utilise as products of capitalism. Such an approach often underplays the relevance of human interpretation and expression within and through space, and, furthermore, fails to recognise the extent to which 'space' exists as an arena of confrontation and contestation. The social relations operating within this arena, challenge and produce new socio-spatial arenas in accordance with the political, economic and cultural beliefs of a specific time. It is these social relations which reproduce structure in a particular time and place and it is through the behaviour, experience and understanding of human agents that structure exists and is determined as structure itself. It is therefore important to realise that structure, *per se* is itself contingent in form and across space and time, existing only in relation to human agency and individuals' actions.

It is evident from the above how several Marxists do attempt to inject an element of humanism into their work (Gramsci: 1971, Ignatieff: 1978), but at the same time, they restrict its development by imposing class categorisations (relating to dominance and subordination) upon the actions of individuals. To completely ignore such analyses purely on the basis of reductionism is to eliminate the basis for the development of a more interpretative approach considerate of the manipulatory role of human agency operating within and through these structures and at times challenging them, as an expression of individuality and perception within time and space. In order to have a clearer understanding of the relevance of space as expression, we need now to turn to the work of Michel Foucault.

## Michel Foucault's Pivotal Arguments

Foucault is often regarded as an Anti-Humanist theorist since he says little about individuals (with their own ideas, hopes and fears) as active makers of their own worlds. What he does do is resist totalising explanations (i.e. the economic, capital-logic or class-logic ones critiqued above) and instead insists that researchers need to focus on the specific details of how particular phenomena weave together in specific times and places: to recognise not totalities but dispersions. In the middle of these dispersions, specific people, their ideas, practices and relations are seen as important (or having effectivity), but not in the sense that Foucault is concerned about individual perceptions, feelings per se. He sets the scene for 'structurally aware', human-centred approaches, but does not go quite far enough. Foucault insists on a sensitivity to details, differences, contexts and hence geographical variation (Philo: 1992) but, in some respects, replaces the Marxists' 'will to economic gain' with a similarly totalising notion of 'will to power'. Some of his claims about space and power (as in the model of 'panopticism') risk themselves as being quite 'totalising' and insensitive to contexts and geography (Philo: 1992).

This is evident in his work "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison" (1977), where Foucault views punishment and the form it adopts as a political tactic operating within the field of power relations. This power is not imposed from above by a totalising and recognised system as Marxist accounts indicate, but operates through individuals and their relations with human beings and other substantive things such as the environment and the political culture at a particular time. It is, in outline, an approach which takes consideration of the spatial dispersion of these 'things' and the relations between them on the ground. Discipline (structure) is imposed via power (through social relations and therefore human agency) and knowledge of those it is imposed upon, the Panopticon being an ideal example of this form of manipulation. Foucault cites Bentham's 'Panopticon' as the architectural configuration of society's disciplinary mechanism of labelling, altering and excluding 'deviants'. Its design was based upon the principle of surveillance:

"at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of



the ring; the peripheric buildings divide into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building ; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy...They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualised and constantly visible. The panoptic mechanism arranges spatial unities that make it possible to see constantly and to recognise immediately" (p.200).

It is the visibility of the 'deviant' from within (the internal spaces of the prison) which assures the power from without. In being branded, dispossessed of an identity and a role as an individual, excluded from society both socially and spatially and driven out of sight, the inmate finds him/herself in an opposite situation. In the Panopticon, the inmates become "caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are the bearers" (p.201). Surveillance does not necessarily have to be continual or perfect in action. Its very design determines how the inmate can be seen, but not see. The unknown becomes a powerful hold over the individual. Thus visibility is knowledge and knowledge is power. This analytical arrangement of space was never practically developed in its ideal form. The Penitentiary is the nearest example where the precise nature of its power lies in an ultimate view and knowledge of all that concerns the inmates. Foucault therefore endorses the idea of the history of power as a history written of spaces (see Philo: 1992) and invites us to move away from totalising approaches to penalty, to analyse what is actually happening across space and to accentuate detail, difference and chaos as a mechanism by which change occurs. As Philo emphasises :

"the playful juxtaposing of different categories of thing; the mixing of tangible and intangible, of natural and human, of collective and individual, of ongoing and time-bound - must be emphasised, as it is a strategy that right from the outset is an attempt to challenge the a priori tendencies that so readily totalise historical inquiry" (p.148).

This is not completely to reject an order to penal development. Indeed, for research purposes, Foucault indicates that within these differences an order does exist, one that is based upon the way in which these substantive things

are actually related in given times and places (and as people and authorities at the time conceive of things relating and how they ought to be related).

Foucault thus recognises what Philo explains as a “geometric turn in histories of power” (1992,p.151). In doing this Foucault has been criticised for his over zealousness with the issue of space, imposing a totalising spatial identity onto the histories of “otherness” and thereby binding the evidence within a “continuing hegemony of reason” (Philo on Derrida: 1992, p.153). It is further indicated that he fails to utilise historical data efficiently “to make space in question precise” (Lemert and Gillan, p.98 quoting from an interview with the French journal *Hérodote*). This might be seen as Foucault’s own failing in his historical studies: he does not live up to his own theoretical structures.

Philo accepts these accusations as a failure to appreciate the real spatial context of Foucault’s work, emphasising Foucault’s geometries of reason and relations across space as substantive geographies; geographies that are not regarded as transcending space from an elevated abstract level, as perceived by some of his critics, but geographies which consider regions and spaces as “substance ridden things”, these things mixing together and relating with one another within a particular time and in accordance to particular spatial relations on the ground. Strategies of the strong are thus determined and responded to by those at the local level within a particular time and space. They are not imposed by a central authority per se, but determined and reacted to by those individuals experiencing them within the institutions.

This approach emphasises a need to distinguish between Foucault as a ‘geometer of power’ attuned to how power relations and spatial arrangements are inter-related (as in the Panopticon), and Foucault as ‘archaeologist of difference’, who by implication takes space seriously because things differ over space, thereby resisting homogeneous totalising social structures. Philo indicates how this approach is conducive to that of a fully ‘post-modern’ geography: one that considers the spaces of the prison as manipulated and manipulating spaces through social relations between staff (as diplomats for wider society but also as individuals with their own experiences and manners of expression) and the individual deviant (stigmatised, labelled and restricted) but still relating to his/ her own

situation in whichever way will accentuate his/ her position within the prison and within society as a whole. Such an approach indicates the importance of particular spaces as arenas for the operation of social relations and frontiers for confrontation and development of these relations and hence, the strategies of the strong and tactics of the weak. This thesis acknowledges this approach, recognising the manner in which prison space may be viewed as acting as a landscape of both knowledge and power, these concepts operating within and through the spaces of the prison, this determining their shape and form.

### **Humanist Accounts and Synthesis**

It is evident from the above how Foucault's work cannot be viewed as adopting a humanist approach to penalty. On reflection, what he manages to do is to rework a structuralist point of view which recognises the 'substance' of space, produced by the landscape, politics and culture within a particular area and through the social relations operating within that space. In doing so, he moves away from a totalising structuralist approach to penalty, and endorses a more dynamic one - one that is considerate of differences through space. Yet, although he provides scope for recognition of social relations operating on the ground through space, he fails to signify the relevance of the individual prisoner and officer in manipulating and making his/ her own space for reasons of knowledge and power other than those associated with gaining control over others. Such an approach is restrictive in form, in that it oppresses the identity and relevance of experience of the individual prisoners and officers co-existing within the confines of the prison and generating social relations, which develop as a means of maintaining equilibrium and stability and more importantly, a sense of individuality for those confined within the prisons. These relationships are themselves shaped by individuals' past experiences both within and without the contexts of the prison environment. Foucault fails to think about individual and collective resistance within the prison (and this modern panoptic society more generally). He therefore fails to recognise that penalty is not a system developed logically from clear-cut power relations between the weak (prisoners) and the strong (officers). It is developed and shaped by the intrinsic social relations produced by thinking, feeling individuals within these establishments, with

personal experiences and knowledge and an in-built desire to exist and survive the prison experience as both individuals and group members.

Thompson, in his major work, "The Poverty of Theory" (1978), stresses the importance of an individual's consciousness and experience in term of the reproduction of social values and progression of a system. He is a Humanist Marxist and here he writes explicitly against the reductionist 'Jumbo Marxism' displayed by the likes of Rusche and Kirchheimer: he is often akin to Gramsci in his arguments. As Cavadino and Dignan (1992) themselves imply:

"discrepancies are not caused by the logic of structures but by the messy and often far from inevitable ways in which people come to understand the world around them and their own practices" (p.69).

Thompson therefore indicates how history only exists as the interpretation of a fact at a particular time and place. He therefore recognises the manner in which process and progress is identifiable within spatial spheres and through relations between substantive things, including the complex human conscience. As Thompson emphasises:

"The human past is not an aggregation of discrete histories but a unitary sum of human behaviour, each aspect of which was related in certain ways to others, just as the individual actors were related in certain ways (by the market, by relations of power and subordination etc.)" (p.232).

In essence Thompson endorses the idea of the past as 'values', operating within and through particular spaces. In doing so he injects a sense of humanism into historical process, referring to the relevance of human interpretation and expression to the (re)production of ideology and law. Although his approach is still Marxist in form, it does not fully implicate sub-structures such as the economy as a direct or even major determinant of everyday human practice. Rather, it stresses the importance of human agency by indicating that social reaction to strategies and structure at particular times and places indeed reproduce these structures and strategies through their reaction to them.

Max Weber (1968) develops this agency-related individualistic approach to penalty and to the development of the penal system and its associated institutions by emphasising the relevance of particular individuals as creative and charismatic beings. He recognises the individuality of human beings, noting the extent to which 'charismatic' tendencies set particular individuals apart from others and "may involve a subjective or internal reorientation born out of suffering, conflicts or enthusiasm" and may take place in times of "psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious, political distress" (p. xx). Weber goes on to emphasise:

"It is in this charismatic act that the potential creativity of the human spirit - a creativity which perhaps in some cases be deranged or evil - is manifest, and it is not only the potential derangement, but such creativity by its very nature and orientation tends to undermine and destroy existing institutions and to burst the limits set by them" (p. xx).

Weber implies that the individual, through these charismatic tendencies, possesses the ability to produce changes in social order. Due to the nature of the process by which these changes are imposed (via charismatic qualities, themselves born out of conflict and suffering, and personal experiences), the transition to a new social order tends to develop irrationally and as a response to crises, influenced by charismatic individuals at particular times and places. As Weber indicates, charisma is "a search for meaning, consistency and order and one's life-space" (p. xxviii), and it tends to emerge as an important element in particular social situations such as the prison, where individuals are expected to respond, behave and identify with their position in a particular manner. In such instances, their charismatic qualities become more significant, and they themselves more respondent to particular symbols in order to give fresh or more helpful meaning to their experiences, new statuses and identities.

Weber emphasises the potential of individuals to recognise their relative positions in society, and to respond in a way that is determined by their own life experiences and perceptions of their particular situation. From this it is evident why Weber stresses the transitory nature of 'our' social orders as being due to 'our' own dynamic and creative qualities. This focus on charisma draws attention to the tendency of social order, situations and spaces simultaneously to continue and change. This has obvious connotations for the



acceptance of autonomy in society. Some groups may willingly accept institutional autonomy, whilst others may oppose it and interpret it in different ways. Anti-systems may evolve, remain latent and then erupt, and, as Weber implies, the possibility of conflict is thereby "rooted in the very process of crystallisation and maintenance of institutional systems" (p. xiv). In effect, Weber emphasises the extent to which social order is dependent upon those who it attempts to manipulate. The role of the individual is paramount to the acceptance and development of a particular order. Weber successfully indicates how our social organisations are susceptible to changes in relation to the ability of particular social groups to become dissatisfied and demand reform at a point which they perceive as a crisis period. Social orders and networks may therefore be viewed as being dependent upon not only cultural, economic and political factors, but also the ability of social groups to perceive, interpret and respond to these manifestations whenever necessary.

This ability of individuals to respond to and to change social structures must be seen as an important element in the determination of the form that penalty adopts and its impact on those it serves to punish and manipulate. Goffman, in his work "Asylums" (1968), emphasises this trend. His analysis of "total institutions" and their "encompassing tendencies" focuses on the daily lives of the inmates and the staff of such institutions (prisons included). It takes seriously the constraints and restrictions which structure their physical and psychological well-being and which they themselves attempt to manipulate in negotiating their own survival and identity as individuals. Goffman indicates how prisoners/ inmates in these institutions are subjected to a form of disculturation where they are stripped of their identity (through the adoption of a new name and number, acquisition of uniform clothing, confiscation of personal possessions and bathing, weighing, measuring and recording) and are then moulded for administrative and control purposes. As he explains:

"The new arrival allows himself (sic) to be shaped and coded into an object that can be fed into the administrative machinery of the establishment, to be worked on smoothly by routine operation" (p.16).

However, such an imposition on the individual prisoner is not accepted without resistance. Goffman suggests how inmates attempt to maintain their

own identities and to adjust to their new circumstances by manipulating the rules, regulations and relationships of the institution to their own advantage. They develop a method of surviving the assault on the 'self' through the manipulation of relationships with staff and other inmates and the spaces in which they exist. These spaces are set and established as part of the system and related to ideas of privilege and reward:

"Places to work and places to sleep become clearly defined as places where certain kinds and levels of privilege obtain, and inmates are shifted very frequently and visibly from one place to another as the administrative device for giving them the punishment or reward their cooperativeness warrants. The inmates are moved, the system is not" (p.54)

Stereotypes emerge not only as a response to the restriction on communication between the two groups (staff and inmates), but also as a form of fraternalization or social solidarity: as part and parcel of the 'inmate subculture' and 'staff sub-culture' binding individuals together. Goffman subsequently focuses attention on the role of the individual within space. He emphasises the many ways in which individuals adjust and manipulate their social positions in an attempt to maintain some form of personal identity. He incorporates ideas of a collective group responding to the needs of the individual and his work incorporates ideas from both Durkheim (1984) and Weber (1968) on the active role of the individual and the ability of the individual to act according to his/ her own experiences and perceptions. What it is important to recognise is the relevance of how spaces in these institutions are used and manipulated by inmates and the authorities and how human agency itself determines the meanings attached to these spaces and the form these structures adopt. In 'Asylums' Goffman talks about the tensions between 'surveillance space' (where inmates are watched over by the institution managers) and 'free space' (where inmates are out of sight and can be 'themselves'):

"Licence, in short, had a geography. I shall call these regions free places... Free places are backstage to the usual performance of staff-inmate relationships" (p.206)



As the above indicates, a humanistic account of penalty incorporates the idea of punishment and the form it adopts not merely as an accepted and uncontested social order or structure, but as one that is itself influenced by those whom it attempts to control and manipulate (human agency). Such an approach allows the reader to recognise the extent to which punishment is administered at particular times and within particular spaces, these being manipulated and dictated by those whom it serves, sometimes to quite a surprising extent.

This form of analysis indicates the relevance of human interpretation and expression to the construction of space. It illustrates how 'spaces of punishment' exist as arenas of contestation and confrontation where human beings are not 'passive recipients' of social order (Goffman: 1968), but continually react and challenge these social structures, thereby creating and reproducing new ones in accordance with the political, cultural and economic circumstances of the time. The adoption of such an approach is often cited as being 'naive', due to an inability to perceive the economic and ideological constraints which prevent individuals from responding to particular social structures and organisations and subsequently from manipulating their own circumstances and reacting to their individual experiences. It is therefore necessary to adopt a more inclusive approach to penalty: one that identifies with the constraints imposed on individuals and their interpretations and perceives the spaces in which human beings exist as both manipulated and manipulating. Cavadino and Dignan (1992) refer to this as a radical pluralist approach, attempting to present a compromise between structuralist analyses and more humanist(ic) accounts.<sup>2</sup> In essence they recognise the problems associated with the Marxist tradition in terms of the extreme emphasis placed upon economics and the manner in which this economic base is supposed to determine class factions and hence the conduct of all social life. And they furthermore recognise the degree to which more humanist interpretations imply an approach dependent upon an overtly simplistic notion of the state as the "honest broker" which acts as an impartial arbiter between the various parties. They in turn explain their proposed convergence of these two approaches:

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<sup>2</sup> This is akin to Giddens and his 'structuration' theory and what the likes of Gregory (1981) and Thrift (1983) sought to do in geography when developing conceptual tools to bridge the 'agency-structure' dualism.

"We think that a coherent radical pluralism can be constructed on the basis of a humanism which accepts, as Marx put it, that human beings 'make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves' (Marx, 1977: 300). These constraining circumstances include the economic, political, cultural, and ideological factors which shape our social world, but neither economics nor ideology is 'basic'" (Cavadino and Dignan: 1992, p. 77).

They explain how ideological and economic factors although of relevance, cannot be viewed as wholly determining the development of a social system. These factors interact with one another and impose restrictions but do not "make a single future inevitable" (Cavadino and Dignan: 1992). Post-modernists would find difficulty in totally endorsing the possibility of ever achieving a convincing theoretical resolution of the Marxism-Humanism (structure-agency) dualism, which Cavadino and Dignan seem to be suggesting. But what they are doing is implying the need for a more dynamic approach to penalty - one that should be viewed as complementary instead of competing. They continue by relating this hypothesis to the current penal system:

"Material factors (such as the shortage of penal resources) interact with ideological developments (such as 'law and order ideology' and the all-important 'crisis of legitimacy') in a complex and sometimes unpredictable manner. Much of this complexity and unpredictability is precisely because the intersection between the material and the ideological occurs in the practices of living human beings: offenders, sentencers, employees of the penal system, politicians and members of the public. *The vital human element makes the study of penalty a complex and uncertain business, but it also means that people can, by their efforts, have a positive effect on the reality of the punishment*" (Cavadino and Dignan, 1992: 78; my italics)

Garland (1991) also emphasises this synthetic approach, recognising the need to develop an argument which realises the actions of human beings as being constrained but not completely restricted, and as open to influence from their personal interpretation and experience:

"Instead of searching for a single explanatory principle, we need to grasp the facts of multiple causality, multiple effects, and multiple meaning. We need to realise that in the penal realm - as in all social experience - specific events or developments usually have a plurality

of causes which interact to shape their final form, a plurality of effects which may be seen as functional or non-functional depending upon one's criteria, and a plurality of meanings which will vary with the actors and audiences involved - though some meanings (or for that matter, causes and effects) may be more powerful than others. The aim of the analysis should always be to capture that variety of causes, effects, and meanings and trace their interaction, rather than reduce them all to a single currency" (Garland: 1991, p. 280).

It is this emphasis on 'interaction' which widens the scope of the analysis and enables a less reductionist and constrained approach to develop - one that enables us to account for those emotive and interpretative forces emanating from our own experiences; ones which themselves are manipulated by the wider social constraints within society, but which at the same time aspire to manipulate these restrictions in a manner that is perceived as optimum and beneficial to survival. These analyses of punishment, endorsing humanistic elements and the interaction of people with "substantive things" (Philo, 1992) within particular spaces and time, require a complex examination of what is actually happening - a more intricate inspection of the form that social relations adopt within certain political, economic and cultural circumstances and the way in which they operate in space. In attempting to grasp an understanding of the driving forces within these social frameworks, it is obviously necessary to recognise the extent to which certain individuals in particular social positions can (or can attempt to) manipulate their situation and social position through the manipulation of social relations across space, the spaces in which they operate being utilised as an arena for confrontation, reaction and prospect. The introduction of a sense of space into the analysis may be perceived as one other restriction on individuals and their actions, and indeed space may be used as such by penal authorities. But in viewing it from this perspective, it is evident it also exists as a type of frontier, particularly within institutions such as prisons, where the availability of space and the functions attached to this space become indicative of privilege, persuasion and power for both prisoners and staff. It is clear that Foucault's clear 'geographical imagination' is central to how I approach my study, but with a greater degree of concern for the true dimensions of human agents operating in and through these spaces. I have attempted therefore, to create a dialogue between his position and that of the Humanist accounts where people figure much more predominantly as thinking-feeling-doing beings

(particularly institutionally through the work of Goffman) and thereby arrive at a synthesis of materials (radical-pluralist account) which I use to frame the rest of the project.

### **Sociology of Imprisonment**

In the previous sections I have developed the theoretical geographical basis to this thesis, extending the relevance of and meanings attached to space by individuals. I have emphasised the manner in which these spaces exist as arenas of contestation and confrontation, where human agents actively seek to challenge these social structures and assert individuality and identity. With regards to this thesis, it is important to acknowledge that the assertion of the individual within a particular space and time, and in relation to an individual's experience and perception of situations, needs to be fully understood in relation to the prison social environment. This environment is not merely a mirror-image of the wider society outwith the prison boundaries. It has developed from the imposition of social control mechanisms on particular individuals confined against their will. This has inadvertently produced a symbolic 'them and us' relationship between the weak (prisoners) and the strong (officers). Several authors have produced discussions on the sociology of imprisonment and the power relations between these two groups, (what I would, to a certain extent, view as types of radical-pluralist approaches to imprisonment), addressing the issues surrounding the nature of social relations within the confines of the prison walls and as developed through space, time and human interaction. An analysis of these approaches is necessary in order to help frame and locate the issues discussed throughout this thesis within the specific context of the prison environment, and to appreciate the background to the understanding of the sociology of imprisonment and its contributions to understanding the relationships between prisoners and staff.

The writing of Erving Goffman in 'Asylums' in 1961 shattered a consensus that the purpose of imprisonment was to reform inmates. It detailed the extent to which staff in institutions were agents of social control; that prisoners and mental patients lived in social worlds of which penologists knew nothing and which essentially shaped and determined inmates'

reactions to the social control mechanisms imposed upon them. Goffman introduced the term 'total institution' defining it as "a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life" (p.xiii). He defined four main characteristics of this concept. The central feature of these total institutions is 'batch living' where "each phase of the members daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others all of whom are treated alike, and required to do the same thing together". (p.17). This he contrasts with "a basic social arrangement in modern society....the individual tends to sleep, play and work in different places, with different co-participants, under different authorities and without an over-all rational plan" (p.17).

The spatial context of his approach is immediately apparent - the physically and psychologically constrained spatial system, where two groups of people- 'large blocks of managed people' and a small group of supervisory staff (whose main task is surveillance) exist side by side and as Goffman infers, are made for each other. This is 'binary management', where "Two different social and cultural worlds develop, jogging along-side each other with points of official contact but little mutual penetration" (p.20). Here the managers' power and social distance is their weapon.

The research presented in this thesis aims to establish how these 'two different social and cultural worlds' exist in and through space and time, and are themselves produced and shaped by the experiences and interpretations of individual prisoners and officers. It is then and only then, that the complex relationship between staff and inmates can be fully understood and developed. I emphasise the fact that although inmates are unable fully to control their own destinies, their subordinate position does not automatically produce 'antagonistic stereotypes'. I attempt to show how these stereotypes emerge from a need for identity of the other (prisoner or officer) - for legitimisation of either group's position and situation and actual justification for being where they are. It is a ploy adapted to understand the 'other' ; to identify differences and barriers between the groups and therefore maintain a form of identity for one another as individuals and as part of the same group. These stereotypes are adopted and asserted at particular times and in



particular places in order to counter assertions of authority. This thesis will develop this idea and attempt to grasp an understanding of the complexities of the prisoner/staff relationship, particularly in light of the recent penal policy developments such as 'Sentence Planning' and the implications this has for the delineation of individual's social markers.

The approach adopted in this thesis does recognise and endorse Goffman's idea of 'disculteration' or 'role-stripping' of the prisoner but only to a limited extent. Goffman indicates that much of this process is achieved through admission procedures, which he views as a "series of abatements, degradation's, humiliations and profanation's of self" (p.24) - a 'mortification' process. To become an inmate involves a total break with the past, symbolised by the acquisition of a new name as well as "photographing, weighing, fingerprinting, assigning numbers, searching, listing personal possessions for storage, undressing, bathing, disinfecting, haircutting, issuing institutional clothing, instructing as to rules and assigning to quarters" (p.25). Such processes certainly remove the inmate's original identity, but Goffman views this as a form of programming where the arrival "allows himself to be shaped and coded into an object that can be fed into the administrative machinery of the establishment, to be worked on smoothly by routine operations" (p.26).

But this approach essentially considers the inmate to be inadequate and lifeless; it does not account for the actions, beliefs, experiences or interpretations of the individual. Goffman develops his sociology of the prison in relation to the control ethics of the prison authorities. Although he recognises the fact that two different groups and cultures exist side by side, he fails to acknowledge the real means by which they do this. He acknowledges the power - knowledge approach of the authorities in relation to the manner in which staff attempt to control prisoners. He fails to explore fully the manner in which inmates relate to this authority, attempting to retain an identity and a sense of self-autonomy, security and stability. Thus he cannot explore the ways in which these strategies of the weak determine how and why the strategies of the strong are implemented.

This thesis will examine prisoners' reactions to prison life as a reaction to this assertion of prisoners' needs for individuality and legitimisation of the 'self'. It

will attempt to understand the tactics prisoners choose to adopt in order to maintain this identity through personal experience, interpretation and development of social relations in space and time. I will emphasise that prisoners do not merely 'exist'. They operate within a constrained world - reacting, challenging and adapting to their environment in line with their own perceptions, interpretations and experiences, and as a consequence formulating their own identities as time goes on. The way in which prisoners react to the environment becomes space specific, reliant on issues of knowledge of their surroundings, security and safety. In conjunction with this approach, I develop Toch's idea of the 'niche' (1992) in Chapter VII and explore the ways in which prisoners 'operate' within the constraints of the system as a means to survive.

Goffman touches on four types of survival technique - withdrawal, intransigence, colonisation and conversion. Such characteristics although progressive in sociological terms, are too structured and generalised. There is no account taken as to how, why and where these characteristics are adopted. There is no account taken of the individuals' experiences and interpretations - no socio-spatial awareness. Goffman's account rather, acts as a model against which reality can be measured and I attempt to adopt this approach throughout the thesis (Jones and Fowler 1984). Goffman focuses attention on similarities between institutions and does not allow the exploration of differences between them. The group approach, although informative is restrictive, merely proving to play up stereotypical identities and values and ignoring realities of institutional strategies and prisoner reactions and tactics to these strategies for reasons of existence. It is the recognition of these identities and values which I argue are central to the successful development of penal strategy within prison establishments.

Several texts followed Goffman's group-based managerial approach. 'Society of Captives' by Gresham Sykes in 1958 was written in the wake of a series of riots in American prisons. The purpose of the project was primarily managerial - to analyse the mechanisms of 'total power' in these maximum security prisons in order to prevent such outbursts. Sykes' study concentrated on the maximum security prison, Trenton Prison, New Jersey. Here, he concluded that the total compliance adopted as a system of management in



the prison, aimed at not reforming, deterring or punishing but simply to exact obedience from prisoners, was an impossibility. He established that any system based on 'total power' is inherently unstable. Obedience is an internalised compulsion and cannot be enforced on prisoners, who for the most part feel no compulsion to do as they are told short of threats of physical force. These threats generally have a short-term impact and are only effective in relation to particular individuals. Staff can only cope with large numbers of prisoners by colluding with them to some degree. Sykes indicated how prison officers are forced to trade "compliance or obedience in certain areas at the cost of tolerating disobedience elsewhere" (p.57), and in doing so, proposed the need for a socio-spatial awareness to imprisonment in relation to the implementation of authority. Such compliance, Sykes viewed as a loss of power due to the structural defect of the idea of total power.

*"The lack of a sense of duty among those who are held captive, the obvious fallacies of coercion, the pathetic collection of rewards and punishments to induce compliance, the strong pressures toward the corruption of the guard in the form of friendship, reciprocity, and the transfer of duties into the hands of trusted inmates - all are structural defects in the prison's system of power rather than individual inadequacies" (p.61) (his italics)*

Sykes' study recognises the relevance of human agency in the practising of penal policy at ground level. The implementation of total power becomes constrained by the complexities of the staff/ prisoner relationship. As Sykes indicates:

*"The fact that the theoretical power of the custodians is imperfect in actuality removes some of the sting of imprisonment as far as the confined criminal is concerned" (p.131)*

This is not to say that Sykes attempts to infer that prison life is made any easier; in fact his work recognises the extent of prisoners' deprivation of liberty, removal of autonomy and the pains of being compelled to associate with other prisoners in close proximity to one another. Sykes views these deprivations and frustrations as playing a crucial role in the shaping of the prisoner social system. He recognises the relevance of individual prisoner's reactions to these impositions on their psyches, describing them as ranging between two poles:

"On the one hand, the prisoner can engage in a highly individualistic war of all against all in which he seeks to mitigate his own plight at the expense of his fellow prisoners; on the other hand, the prisoner can attempt to form a close alliance with his fellow captives and to present a unified front against the custodians." (p.131)

Such an approach is less 'structured' than that of Goffman's and recognises individual prisoner's responses to imprisonment. As Sykes explains:

"It is the changing mixture of these antithetical behaviour patterns and their under-lying values which makes up the social system we label so grossly, so overly simply, as the prison community." (p.131)

In essence, Sykes realises the complexities of the individual social relations operating within the prison and the implications these have for the strategies of the strong and tactics of the weak. As Sykes concludes, it is the pattern of social interaction within the confines of the prison boundaries, operating between prisoners and officers through specific times and spaces which determines the development and form the prison community adopts:

"...present knowledge of human behaviour is sufficient to let us say that whatever the influence of imprisonment on the man held captive may be, it will be a product of the patterns of social interaction which the prisoner enters into day after day, year after year, and not of the details of prison architecture, brief exhortations to reform, or sporadic public attacks on the "prison problem"". (p.134)

This thesis intends to show how the authoritarian structure of the prison operates through these human agents and is thereby legitimated and reproduced. It will be emphasised that control in prison is a transient issue - constantly out of equilibrium - reacting to and challenged by the insecurities of both groups - used as a means to reassert identities and counter the 'unknown'.

Sykes however fails to develop fully his social interaction approach and chooses instead to remain within the confines of the group stereotypes to discuss his ideas of the 'battle of compliance'. Terence and Pauline Morris, in their text 'Pentonville: a Sociological Study of an English Prison' (1963) recognised the limitations of Sykes' approach, considering that the effects of

imprisonment on prisoners varied enormously from individual to individual. At the same time they extend their explanation to include and endorse the relevance of the spaces outwith the prison to the inmates; the importance of prisoners' previous existence, identities, experiences and histories on their abilities to cope within and without prison. For some prisoners

"it is not so much being shut in, as being unable to influence the course of events outside. Wives may be unfaithful, children sick, landlords may evict, personal property may be pawned or sold, hire purchase companies may foreclose...deprivation of liberty is meaningful, therefore, to the extent that a man is emotionally involved in the outside world, for although family and friends can help him retain his sense of social identity, if they are in trouble they may only emphasise his captive innocence." (Morris: 1963; p.164-165).

As the Morrisises imply, the complexities of the prison subculture far outreach the physical and psychological experiences within, but are themselves interpreted differently by individuals with very different life experiences and abilities to cope. This thesis will develop this approach, attempting to understand the impact imprisonment has on individuals with very different backgrounds, criminal histories, past existences, and therefore approaches to prison life.

Morris and Morris, Sykes and Goffman are all in agreement about the loss of autonomy which prisoners suffer and the triviality this authority and control adopts. The close proximity of prisoners to one another is also considered relevant. As Chapter VII will show, the need for privacy and safety in prison is a major determinant of the manner in which prisoners structure their coping strategies and tactics to survive and extent to which this was true over thirty years ago.

"In Pentonville, it is not so much the fear of violence or sexual exploitation, though these are ever-present, but the distaste of being compelled to live in close proximity with men who may be degenerate and dirty in their personal habits, socially unpleasant, or guilty of crimes which other prisoners regard as revolting." (Morris & Morris: 1963; p. 168-169)

The need for control of prisoners' personal spaces is a need for identification of the 'self' and a feeling of autonomy and control over one's own

surroundings and being. Toch (1992) develops this approach inferring that the need for privacy is required for the reassertion of the self away from the 'madding crowd'. This concept is developed more fully in Chapter VII.

Both 'Society of Captives' and 'Pentonville' draw on the pioneering work of Donald Clemmer, who developed the concept of 'prisonisation'. This he described as assimilation, a swallowing up and absorbing process. It involves

"the taking on, in greater or lesser degree, of the folkways, mores, customs and general culture of the penitentiary." (Clemmer: 1940; p.299)

In prison, a prisoner becomes "an anonymous figure in a subordinate group. A number replaces a name. He (sic) wears the clothes of the other members of the subordinate group. He is questioned and admonished. He soon learns that the warden is all powerful." (Clemmer: 1940; p.299)

According to Clemmer, the prisoner essentially learns how to survive in the tough, deprived and often dangerous society and slots into the prison subculture. Although this assertion is true, the reactions to the phenomenon of 'prisonisation', are, as the Morris' imply not homogeneous. The procedure is not uniformly discriminative but is dependent upon the prisoner's own interpretations and experiences. Morris and Morris indicate the relevance of previous exposure to prison culture for the individual - whether the prisoner is able to maintain contacts outside; whether he/ she "consciously accepts the dogmas and codes of the inmate culture" and the nature of the personal relationships he/ she makes in prison (Morris: 1963; p.294-295). They also establish the relevance of whether the prisoner sees him/ herself as a member of a criminal subculture extending outside the prison. The impact of prisonisation is therefore not purely seen in isolation to the confines of the prison. Morris and Morris examine it in relation to the spatial changes the prisoner experiences both physically and psychologically, the spaces and associated previous identities and experiences of the prisoner outwith the prison, being considered as determinants of the prisoner's willingness and ability to adopt the codes of prison life and personally cope. This theory is extended in this thesis, in an attempt to understand the

complex tactics utilised by prisoners to achieve formation of identity and cope in retaliation to the strategies employed by the authorities.

## **Conclusions**

It is the aim of this thesis, therefore, to gain a snapshot in time and space of the power-based element to imprisonment and to recognise the role of the individual in shaping his/her own destiny within the restrictive spaces of the prison. I will emphasise the need to become more geographically sensitive and to access the spaces of the 'other' both inside and outside the perimeter of the prison establishment in order to gain a clearer understanding of the sociology of imprisonment; of how prisoners and staff individually exist and cope within and through the confines of the prison, manipulating and reproducing the structure and culture of the spaces they co-habit, as a means of maintaining knowledge, stability, autonomy, individuality and security.

In the next chapter, I attempt to develop further a geographically-sensitive dialogue of penalty, through an examination of the relationship between developments in penal policy and the shaping of prison space in Scotland.



## CHAPTER II

The central aim of this chapter is to frame the context of the study - to advance an understanding of the factors which have historically, socially and culturally determined the development of penal policy and prison design. This approach therefore includes a brief overview of the development of penal policy, focusing on the period since the crisis in Scottish prisons during the 1980s, and concentrating specifically on 'Sentence Planning' and its resultant socio-spatial implications for the Scottish Prison Service (SPS). In order to fully appreciate the manner in which prison space has been utilised historically and has itself manipulated and reproduced the final outcome of penal policy, it is necessary to examine the political and historical nature of the British penal system. In order to do this effectively, I will examine the factors that have affected the location (the macro geography) and the architecture and internal design (the micro geography) of penal institutions. I do this first as an attempt to gain a better understanding of the means by which spatial segregation and an associated removal of liberty has been used as a method of punishment. Second, I wish to emphasise the extent to which society's past ideas relating to punishment (and the physical remains of these ideas in terms of prison architecture, use of internal and external spaces and location) have proven both enabling and disabling to the operation of the present day penal system. In this context, the term 'space' refers to the 'physical' environment in which offenders sentenced by the courts are incarcerated and where prison officers observe and control prisoners' daily lives (in their cells, galleries, dining areas, recreation and visiting areas).

### *The History and Geography of Penal Systems*

This section will attempt to assess the ways in which spaces in prisons have been utilised politically and historically. It will emphasise the fact that since the late nineteenth century, society's methods of incarcerating deviants for punitive purposes has experienced a limited transformation in relation to the physical design and use of spaces for these purposes. The physical remains of past ideas have merely been recycled by short-term government policy, in a bold attempt to cope sufficiently with ever expanding prisoner populations. Long-term solutions have consistently been over-ridden or withheld by short-

term government policy and 'crises' (disturbances) within prisons themselves. It will be argued that the prison system has become less an outcome of penal justifications, and more a strategy for coping with 'deviants', using scarce and dilapidated building resources. In this century particularly, the justification for sending offenders to prison as punishment has become a secondary political and moral concern. The large numbers of prisoners and insufficient accommodation has produced a system that incarcerates offenders 'for' punishment in times when penal reformers have become aware of the need to move towards the development of normalised environments in prison through the recognition of human rights.

In order to analyse those factors which have affected the development of the use of space in prisons, I will not seek to condense the development of the penal system into a chronology of 'transitions' in the justifications for particular methods of punishment (and the subsequent related physical transformations of these penal arenas). This would merely result in painting a rather crude and reductionist view of a system that has very much been open to the influence of social, economic, cultural and political factors. Several detailed analyses already exist. These tend to focus on the prison as a purposely constructed institution through time and view the institution as the outcome of a particular ordered and progressive mode of thinking (e.g. Ignatieff 1978). In this thesis however, I intend to extract and highlight those issues which have consistently served to affect the use of space in prisons and have contributed to modifications of the system. In the following sections, I will therefore consider the social, economic, political and cultural factors which have proven influential in the development of the geographies of the penal system in Britain. As Adler and Longhurst (1994) argue, it is important to contextualise the present by studying how it developed from the past.

### **Social progress - from inflicting pain to curtailing rights**

As already emphasised, the social, cultural, economic and political reasons put forward to justify punishment in society have determined the form of punishment adopted and therefore the design and construction of the buildings in which punishment has been implemented. Since the 17th century, the justifications for punishment in Britain as a whole have



experienced a number of subtle transformations. Shifts in thinking and ideology have occurred, caused by the undermining in legitimacy of earlier justifications by 'social progress'. These changes have been instigated by disillusionment with current thinking and proof of the ineffectiveness of the particular penal system operating at a particular time. This has determined the development of the penal system, from one based on the infliction of pain to the body, to the restriction of an individual's liberty. A shift in control methods has resulted- from one based upon control over the spaces of the body, to one that suspends an individual's rights by their access to and use of space:

"Physical Pain, the pain of the body itself, is no longer the constituent element of the penalty. From being an art of unbearable sensations, punishment has become an economy of suspended rights'. (Foucault: 1977,p.11)

It is important to emphasise how such a shift was not as simplistic or straightforward as it may seem. Several factors determined the development of a form of punishment based on the "economy of suspended rights" and the subsequent shifts in the justifications for the transformations of the system to the present day. From being used as a deterrence mechanism in the 18th century/early 19th century (the squalid conditions and levels of vice and debauchery, justifying their deterrent values), dissatisfaction with this form of punishment made way in the mid nineteenth century for the implementation of reform-based methods of punishment.

The widespread adoption of the Penitentiary (the model prison) determined full scale adoption and control of hard labour and religious indoctrination as a way to reconcile deterrence with reform. It existed as :

"the culmination of a history of efforts to devise a perfectly rational and reformatory mode of imprisonment." (Ignatieff: 1978, p.11)

Regular diets, medical examinations, the issuing of uniforms and implementation of stricter regimes and methods of control, (the Silent and

Separate Systems)<sup>1</sup> were implemented as the new discipline and reform mechanisms for society's deviants.

By the 20th century, penalty had experienced a further shift towards the idea of balancing the aims of deterrence and retribution with ideas of reform and rehabilitation of the offender. In the case of Scotland, a number of policies were implemented - 'Treatment and Training', 'Custody and Care' (examined in the next section). The rehabilitation of offenders underpins the development of the idea of Special Units (smaller units for violent prisoners), emphasising the relevance of the physical environment to the 'social' environment in which prisoners carry out their daily routines. This all culminated in the most recent policy document, 'Opportunity and Responsibility' which endorses the idea of producing the 'responsible individual' for successful release into society (see the following section of this chapter).

As is evident from the brief historical introduction above, Western society's justifications for punishment have experienced transformations determining changes to the ways in which offenders are incarcerated, but more relevantly the adoption of new and different spatial strategies for implementation of the particular forms of punishment. Space in prisons has been used in various ways to deter, reform (as in the Penitentiary) and rehabilitate (with particular reference to present day prisons and the Special Units), but also to cope. (Toch: 1992) The adoption of such spatial strategies have, however, proven complex in so far as particular factors at particular places and times have produced various transformations in the form of punishment implemented (and the design and utilisation of space in prisons). It is these factors that this chapter will now examine.

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<sup>1</sup> The Separate System was based on the principle of keeping prisoners separate from one another at all times and locking them in separate cells where they were made to complete a certain amount of work each day. Even at Chapel-time, they were placed in separate boxes designed in such a way as they were only able to see the chaplain. At exercise time they had to wear hoods to prevent them from seeing one another. The Silent System used a different form of discipline: allowing prisoners to congregate together at work but under strict silent conditions. Anyone found to be breaking the rule was severely punished.

### **Political and economic effects on space.**

As already emphasised, and as will be considered later on in this chapter, the social, cultural and more importantly, economic and political environment have proven to be important factors in determining the form punishment adopts and the spaces in which it is enforced. Shifts in political and economic circumstances at both an international and national level have, to the present day, affected and contributed to changes in the form of incarceration. Examples are apparent with the rise of the workhouses justified by the idea that idleness created crime (Foucault: 1977, p.122); the use of warships and hulks on the Thames at Woolwich and at Plymouth and Gosport for the incarceration of convicts used for alternative punishment in place of transportation (the temporary suspension of transportation in 1775 was due to the outbreak of American War (Ignatieff: 1978)); the rise of a new set of class relations motivated by such philanthropists such as John Howard and the associated stabilisation of the workforce and disciplining of it in an attempt to improve the morals of workers (Ignatieff: 1978).

Throughout the development of the penal system, the political climate has played an important part in shaping and shifting the justifications for punishment and discourse. The penal system has developed from one based merely on deterrence to one bent on reform and deterrence, this in turn determining the adoption of new forms of discipline and subsequently new ways in the utilisation of space within both the prison establishment and system as a whole. In more recent times, particularly the period post 1980, there has occurred a vigorous struggle between dominant elements in the Scottish prison system over ideas on control. The outcome of this struggle has been a reformation of discourse about imprisonment and the emergence of a new form of social order. This is discussed in detail in the second part of this chapter.

### **Punishment - a cultural agent**

Nevertheless, it is important to understand that sources of penal change are not just embedded in the political, social and economic climate at a particular time and place. Garland (1991) argues that it is through these economic,

political and social structures that the “value, meaning and emotion which we call ‘culture’” (p. 249) comes into play. Here he emphasises an agency-related approach and one that is sensitive to the “positive enactment and extension” of society’s strategic power. In essence, he adopts a Foucauldian approach that is positioned in the ‘locale’ and on the ground - a positive, physical reflection of the generic cultural patterns. From this it is apparent that the actual practice of penalty produces and symbolises social meaning - it communicates society’s aims and is itself conceived of those aims. Garland attempts to extend Foucault’s work, stating how further symbolic significance to the idea of discipline is necessary. He relates to the appearance of the actual fabric of the penal institutions as a public source of representation and cultural symbolism, the sentencing of offenders and the classification and stereotyping of criminals (see the following section) as important examples of the role of culture in the development of the penal system.

The works of Evans (1982) and Bender (1987) indicate how architectural design has played an important role in the conveyance and “vocabularies of representation” (p.258):

“the kind of *tableau vivant* appearance which the Newgate prison displayed to the public in the eighteenth century, with its conventional city-gate architecture enlivened by the visible appearance of prisoners at the begging gate and at the open windows, later gave way to the very different imagery of *architecture terrible*, which was explicitly designed to project a visual representation of the meaning of imprisonment” (Garland: 1991, p. 259).

Evans (1982) explains how these latter facades with spikes, statues of convicts and “mausoleum-like appearance” (Garland: 1991, p.259) were deceiving in appearance in terms of the humane regime which was operating inside the prison walls.

The prisons of today are built and utilised more as a response to the need for security, control, order, and a ‘holding’ reserve for criminals (see the following section), than as a sense of them being humane and normalised environments for offenders to be detained within. They must however continue to be viewed as a form of symbolism and representation for wider society. As Garland observes, we are still shocked by the pictures of prisoners

on roofs, protesting their innocence and resisting what they perceive to be unorthodox treatment. Such public displays concern us not only because they are views of the unexpected - opposite to illusions of the calm, collected and controlled institutional power of the authorities, but also because they make us attentive to the fact that we have no, or limited, knowledge of what goes on behind the perimeter walls of the prison. Our stereotypical images of prisoners shackled by the powerful regime of authority have only recently been shattered. It is only recently that we have been provided with images of vandalised prisons, destroyed facilities and wasted resources. Our lack of knowledge has confronted us face-on. Through receiving information from the media, we have realised the extent of these outbreaks of violence. It has not only inspired a view of time spent in prison as being 'too easy' by the general public, but has furthermore, and as a response to this (and the ability of prisoners to resort to physical violence as a means of getting their requirements recognised), reproduced and redefined new roles for those at the frontier of the system - officers and prisoners. No longer do prisoners resort to form and to stereotypical behaviour. They react to a perceived need to legitimate their status - what Cavadino and Dignan (1992) perceive as "moral reactions" (p.30) based on what individuals actually believe is right and wrong and which itself determines the need to act on those beliefs.

This need for legitimation may help explain what Cavadino and Dignan refer to as a 'crisis' in the prison system and what may be viewed as a direct consequence of the inability of the system and its physical representations on the ground (penal establishments), to convey a strong symbolic representation of what its role and direction actually is. The development of the penal system as I view it has predominantly lost its way - shackled and confined by the architecture of the past and restricted by the humanistic tendencies of the present, with a need for more information and a more open approach. In essence, the breakdown in the code of "what the eye does not see, the heart will not grieve" has placed the system in turmoil and forced it to become more people-responsive as well as open and less secretive. This is particularly relevant in the case of Scotland with the recent all-prison establishment surveys on prisoner and staff needs and, more importantly the strategy of 'Sentence Planning' (see the second section of this chapter).



## **Cultural representation - The Sentencing and Classification of Offenders**

Sentencing policies and the classification of offenders have proven to be important determinants of high prisoner populations and hence overcrowding of particular categories of prisoner, this having important spatial implications on both a macro and micro scale. The cultural significance of sentencing as a method of 'sending a message to the people' is of obvious relevance. The passing of a sentence has a symbolic meaning in relation to signalling society's condemnation of crime and symbolising its own attitudes and traditions. As Garland (1991) states:

"The various sanctions available to the court are not merely a repertoire of techniques for handling offenders, they are also a system of signs which are used to convey specific meanings in terms which are generally understood by the social audience...Thus whenever a sentence is passed, the sentence knowingly deploys a conventional device for the expression of meaning, and engages in a symbolic communication of greater or lesser significance" (p. 256).

These symbols are themselves reflected within the prison environment - they are not merely confined to the court-house. They aid in structuring and classifying society's perceptions of deviancy and therefore determine the manner in which establishments operate. These signals have not only been reflected and represented by the culture within the prison but also by its physical appearance, which has itself been used to communicate back to the public a symbol of "unshakeable authority, of stored up power, and a silent brooding capacity to control transience" (Garland: 1991, p.260). The passing of sentences by the court is thus not merely a 'process' - it exists as a symbol of society's culture determining the classification of offenders and the manner in which they are treated spatially both within and without the prison walls.

However, it is also necessary to emphasise the political and economic significance of the sentencing policies, and the resultant wider physical impact this has on the prison population and on the effective utilisation of space in penal establishments. England and Wales have faced a more acute problem of high prisoner populations than that of Scotland. Table One (see p. 65) shows a breakdown of where high concentrations of prisoners occur in the system in relation to age and gender.



Several reasons have been proposed for such an imbalance in the concentration of prisoners. The actual number of offenders sentenced by the courts is an obvious factor. Figures published by the Council of Europe have revealed how the UK has consistently featured at the top of the league table of imprisonment rates (see Table Two - p. 66).

In the U.K. these figures mask variations in sentencing policies between courts. As Stern (1989) explains:

“In 1987 over 74,000 sentences of immediate custody were passed. Of these, 26,100 were passed by magistrates courts. Magistrates also sent 19,000 people to prison for not paying their fines. The higher court, the Crown Court, sent 48,100. Since magistrates’ powers are limited to a sentence of six months’ imprisonment (with a twelve months’ maximum for more than one offence) the sentences they pass are shorter. In 1987, the average length of sentence given to men aged twenty-one or over was just under three months, whereas in the Crown Court it was over 19 months” (p.33).

Such discrepancies have obvious spatial implications not only within particular regions of the country but within specific types of prison. Local prisons are forced to bear the brunt of prison overcrowding due to the high proportion of offenders on remand. Inflexibility in the system, relating to the classification of different prisons - remand, local, training, Category ‘C’, Women, Open, Dispersal, Young Offender have further complications for the utilisation of space. Women’s prisons will not accommodate men; YOI’s only take offenders under 21 and so on. And, not only do regional indiscrepancies occur with regard to sentencing policy. A report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons in 1984 referred to the regional variations in the categorisation of prisoners and fundamental confusion between classification and allocation. It was discovered that “on occasions category criteria are adjusted in order that a sufficient number of candidates can be found” to fill the prison (H.O. 1984b, para 3.2). Such is the inflexible nature of the prison estates in relation to the accommodation of ever increasing populations, that offenders have to be recategorised in order to carry out their sentence and help maintain a balanced system.

**Table One: Average Daily Population in Penal Establishments by Sex and Custody in Scotland.<sup>2</sup>**

	<b>1989</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>
<b>Total</b>	4986	4724	4839	5257	5637
<b>Male</b>	4838	4587	4696	5099	5466
<b>Female</b>	147	137	143	158	171
<b>Remand</b>	770	751	770	876	948
<b>Persons under Sentence (sub-total)</b>	4209	3901	4056	4375	4686
<b>Adults</b>	3341	3201	3322	3552	3795
<b>Y.O's</b>	813	708	684	769	819

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<sup>2</sup> Criminal Justice Series (1994) : Statistical Bulletin, Prison Statistics Scotland 1993, HMSO

**Table Two : Detention Rate per 100,000 population of member states of the Council of Europe as at February 1, 1990 (McManus: 1995)**

<b>Austria</b>	<b>83.0</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>71.0</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	<b>40.2</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>61.0</b>
<b>Finland</b>	<b>71.7</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>81.2</b>
<b>West Germany</b>	<b>83.8</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>48.7</b>
<b>Iceland</b>	<b>39.8</b>
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>56.0</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>55.1</b>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>92.6</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>44.2</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>85.0</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>60.0</b>

**UK**

<b>England</b>	<b>93.3</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>92.5</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>94.8</b>
<b>N. Ireland</b>	<b>112.3</b>

Such unorthodox occurrences are not unusual in a system that has constantly suffered from overcrowding and which has been disabled by the physical remains of past ideas. The use of hulks, warships and more recently police cells are but a few ways in which the system has attempted to cope spatially and continues to do so. With such inflexible resources, these methods of incarceration have proven indispensable to the system. The utilisation of space has thus not only been determined by society's justifications for imprisonment, but by the need of the penal system to maintain a balance between security, control, deterrence and reform and as a type of social control mechanism.

Following the prison riots in 1990, the Woolf Inquiry proposed several changes regarding the sentencing of offenders (and reduction in the number of people remanded in custody - p.440) and improvement in the prisons estate. This was proposed in relation to smaller units of 50-70 prisoners within prisons designed to hold no more than 400 prisoners and "sited within reasonable proximity to, and having close connections with the community with which they prisoners they hold have their closest links" (p.443). The inflexibility of the prisons estate, coupled with limited resources and an administrative system reliant on short term government policy, severely throws into question the extent to which such long-term recommendations will and can be wholeheartedly adopted. What it does reveal, is the relevance of the role of the courts and classification of prisoners in recently determining the concentrations of prisoners in particular regions of the country and within particular types of institution.

### **Security, Order and Control**

Throughout the previous four sections detailing the social, economic, cultural and political factors determining the development and utilisation of the macro and micro geographies of the penal system in Britain, there has run a common issue - that of the secure custody of prisoners as a social, cultural, political and economic symbol for the rest of society. The security ethics of penal systems have been used throughout history as methods of restricting and of confining those condemned to the internal spaces of the prison, as a means of asserting the symbolic and cultural nature of their role in society.

The maintenance of the overarching structural significance and power of penalty has always been considered necessary to restrict offenders confined against their will, who have sought on many occasions to break free from the establishments and initiate a 'crisis' situation. It is through the security, order and regime within the establishment that the autonomy of the system as a whole is made to bear down upon its recipients. Legislation has continually sought to convey this power ethic and has been developed and imposed at times of perceived crisis and need for reform and assertion of autonomy of the system to maintain order and equilibrium. In more recent times, this power ethic has been conveyed through penal policy but in a manner that has been forced to take account of the justification for imprisonment and legitimate a more normalised and rehabilitative form of punishment. Legislation imposed from the late 1970s onwards reflects this two-pronged approach to penalty.

Published on 31st October 1979, the May Inquiry drew attention to problems of overcrowding and management problems in prisons across the country (industrial relations being a significant disruptive factor at that time for the system as a whole). The prison system's sense of autonomy and ability to justify its actions was in crisis. At the same time the Inquiry proposed constructive criticism with regards to the secure but humane containment of prisoners. All this had obvious spatial implications. In Scotland, particular reference was made to the need for development of Peterhead Prison (due to structural neglect) and Shotts Prison, which at the time existed as a 'truncated monster' (Coyle: 1991, p.120). The abolition of cell-sharing and provision of toilet facilities was also suggested. Despite these recommendations, the Government responded with limited enthusiasm with regard to suggested changes to prison structure and regime.

Attention was furthermore paid to the incarceration of long-term prisoners, particularly with regard to those posing a security threat. The Inquiry was sceptical of the dispersal concept for Category 'A' prisoners (comprising eight prisons in England in 1980). The publication of the Control Review Committee Report in 1984 served to further question problems of imbalance between security, control and regime with regards to the dispersal or concentration of category 'A' offenders across the country. It reconsidered its

approach, paying particular attention to the ideas of architecture and prison design as the ultimate way to cope, suggesting the adoption of American New Generation designs. These were based upon the adoption of particular building designs and decentralisation of management. They comprised small units of 50-100 prisoners:

“with their cells arranged around, and opening onto, a central multi-use area, which enables staff to observe the cells without having to move about in a consciously patrolling manner. This together with the absence of long cell corridors and numerous recesses improves the ease of surveillance” (Ditchfield: 1990, p. 84).

The shift to such small scale confinement however, required a particular style of management - Mecklenburg in the US established this.<sup>3</sup> As Ditchfield emphasises:

“new generation architecture is not a sufficient condition of control but needs, at the very least, to be matched by an appropriate style of management” (p.98).

It is important to emphasise how all these architectural and management proposals were suggested by committees as methods of maintaining order and control and alleviating what were perceived as ‘crises’ at that time. In Scotland this was particularly true. Small-scale disruptions and violence against staff could not be stemmed by the use of Prison (Scotland) Rule 36<sup>4</sup> due to a relative increase in privileges granted to prisoners. It was not a sufficient form of deterrent and, in 1966 with pressure from the Scottish Prison Officers’ Association (SPOA), it was established a need to disperse the worst of violent and troublesome offenders housed in Peterhead Prison to a new unit at Inverness Prison. As Coyle illustrates:

“The expected profile of such prisoners would include a record of subversive behaviour, usually accompanied by violence against other prisoners and/or staff...The routine in the proposed unit was to be a

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<sup>3</sup> Here, security and control problems within this new-age design prison determined how a particular style of architecture required a particular type of regime and unit management scheme (Rutherford: 1985).

<sup>4</sup> In particularly extreme cases where discipline has been breached, the governor can request application of the provisions of this rule from the Secretary of State or the Visiting Committee to restrict the freedom of the prisoner by arranging for him/her to work in-cell and not associate with other prisoners at all, for the period not exceeding one month.



spartan one, consisting of hard work, strict supervision and limited 'privileges'" (p.130).

However, this restrictive regime tended to exacerbate the prisoners' behaviour and after several incidents in the Inverness Unit (the 'cages') between 1969 and 1972, and concerns aired by the SPOA over staff safety, a decision was made to set up the Barlinnie Special Unit. This opened in 1973 and is able to accommodate eight prisoners, all serving long sentences and deemed to be violent prisoners. It was intended that the Unit would operate as a 'therapeutic milieu', staffed by "Discipline and Nurse Officers and where the emphasis was on 'treating' those who had behaved, or were suspected of being likely to behave, in a violent manner" (SPS: 1994; p. 14). The regime was unstructured and as such, the notion of a 'community' was created, through the commencement of weekly community meetings and ad hoc special meetings (as at Shotts Special Unit - see Chapter VII). Emphasis on control by the authorities had thus shifted to an relatively unstructured programme of work and a form of self-governing regime, where prisoners were given an opportunity to openly express their opinions about the running of the Unit. The success of the Unit in containing violent and disruptive prisoners, through provision of good facilities and a more open regime has produced a certain degree of uneasiness within the prison system between both staff and prisoners, who view it as a soft option, thereby inviting the statement "Violence pays". The 'Report of the Working Party on Barlinnie Special Unit' (SPS: 1994) details how certain myths and misconceptions have arisen from the operation of the Unit, which also apply to Shotts Special Unit. Prisoners within the Unit did not control admission to the Unit (Governors retained the right to make the final decision); the Unit did not represent a reward for bad behaviour, as perceived by those outside - transfers to the Unit produce many psychological difficulties in coming to terms with the experience, particularly for those who have a long history of mainstream regimes; staff who worked there were not given an easy job - they were required to work closely with prisoners, which was particularly difficult for prisoners who had themselves experienced many difficulties with Discipline Officers in mainstream prisons. A change in perception was therefore required by both prisoners and officers in order to 'survive' the Unit experience.

The major incidents in Perth, Barlinnie and Shotts prisons in 1987 and which concluded with the hostage taking in Peterhead prison in October 1987, resulted in complete 'lock-down' of all establishments. The system was again in crisis, and panic approaches were implemented as a means of coping. Prisoners had their association time with fellow prisoners restricted and were only gradually allowed to turn to normality. Long-term establishments remained under these conditions for longer periods of time. Sixty prisoners, deemed to be of a violent temperament within the long-term population were identified within the entire prison system and sent to Peterhead prison under Prison (Scotland) Rule 36. This was only a short-term measure and one that once again invited frustration and violence from prisoners against staff. The Scottish Prison Service thereby produced the discussion document "Assessment and Control" in 1988 which itself emphasised the need to segregate such violent offenders in smaller units and resulted in an extension of the small unit strategy - the development of the Shotts Unit in 1990.

These shifts in spatial strategies were aimed at balancing the concepts of security and control and order within prison establishments, thereby determining a stable system. Two factors emerge from these responses to the need for equilibrium and order in prisons: First, that committees set up to assess issues of security and control have constantly proposed large scale changes to existing prison infrastructure, linking ideas of equilibrium in the system to the dispersal/ concentration of prisoners across space and the utilisation of space within the prison. Secondly, that such committees have literally always been commissioned at a time of 'crisis' (demonstrations and disruptions) in the prison system, and in Scotland's case as a response to pressure from the SPOA in relation to the imminent safety of their staff.

However, an analysis of the manner by which the recommendations made by these committees are adopted, emphasises just how controversial and symbolic the utilisation of space in prisons is to the Government and the public. Adoption of strategies for prisons have tended to be adopted in half-hearted manners - the May Inquiry, the CRC Report, the Working Party on new Generation Prisons and even the Woolf Report have politically been approached with scepticism and caution to the extent that few major changes have occurred. These committees recommended the implementation of

sweeping strategies and in particular, the redevelopment of the physical spaces within the prison establishments. Such recommendations have important political, financial and cultural costs associated with them, not least the extent to which the Government must maintain the cultural significance of imprisonment for the purposes of law and order in wider society and at the same time maintain security as a means to prevent future 'crises' from occurring from within the prisons (thereby justifying the reasons for imprisonment as punishment outwith the establishments). In Scotland changes have occurred to the structural design of prisons as well as administrative changes to the SPS as a result of these recommendations. These changes have, however, been implemented in relation to a much smaller prisoner population, and in a dispersed fashion, and as a response to major incidents. The effects are viewed by penologists and politicians alike as insignificant (due to the number of prisoners detained in the units) and the units are marginalised by the rest of the system due to the 'softly softly' approach and easy regimes operated within these units.

The utilisation of space in prisons is thus caught up in a dilemma, where governments attempt to balance the idea of the prison as a stable and secure institution within, (thereby justifying it as a sensible method of punishment), with imprisonment existing as a symbol of control and condemnation of crime and disorder. As Garland (1991) states:

"institutions of punishment should be seen - and should see themselves - as institutions for the expressions of social values, sensibility, and morality, rather than as instrumental means to a penological end"(p.291).

Such is the problem caused by attempting to establish a balance between these two concepts, that any proposals aimed at changing the macro or micro geographies of the system are treated with caution and sporadically adopted. Progress is therefore generally superficial, prison establishments having to continue to cope and maintain equilibrium tenuously, rather than improve conditions and advance towards a more stable system.

## Conclusions

This section has attempted to examine the various social, economic, political and cultural factors which have affected the utilisation of space in prisons. These factors have played a vital role in historically shaping the design and use of space within prisons, these spaces reflecting the ideas which were conducive to the political, economic and cultural climate at a particular time and within a particular place. The design of prison establishments and development of the penal system as a whole has evolved 'naturally' and not in accordance with any consistently applied set of values or designs. As I have emphasised, an examination of historical records and policy reports reveals how shifts in thinking on penalty and the implementation of new spatial strategies have tended to occur at times of crises. Many examples have been cited in the text - the cessation of transportation determining the use of Hulks to incarcerate prisoners; outbreaks of gaol fever forcibly producing new prison designs and a radical rebuilding programme; disruptions to the prison establishments from violent prisoners evoking a need to recategorise and concentrate those with threatening behaviour to smaller units; prison officer trade union uprisings and unrest within particular establishments provoking the Government to set up enquiries such as the May Inquiry, Woolf Inquiry.

It is therefore important to understand how the utilisation of space in prisons has not merely evolved over time from a system based on torture and pain to the body, to an enlightened system incorporating restriction of liberty and a more 'humane' treatment of deviants. Such a chronology is too structural: devoid of the actions, beliefs, and values of individuals (and therefore of human agency). Its development is essentially a progression that has relied on crises from within - crises which have shaken the roots of the autonomy of this culturally and politically symbolic system. These crises have proven influential in challenging and provoking ideas of that time, thereby producing changes which have been aimed at implementing stability, equilibrium and order for the time being.

Prison space has thus not only been used by the authorities as a method of treating, deterring, rehabilitating and reforming offenders. It has ultimately

been used as the central element of a 'coping strategy' for the authorities - a representation of order, symbolising the power of the authorities and society in its condemnation of crime. It is essentially a physical reflection of a moral need as perceived by society at that time. It is the intrinsic nature of these penal institutions (and their role in society as a symbol of morality and condemnation of crime) which has recently been challenged. The moral structure/power from above is confronted by the 'moral reactions', values and beliefs of those people on the ground (the prisoners, officers and governors) who are the essential 'cogs' through which the entire system turns and is dependant upon. This has resulted in a 'crisis of legitimacy' - a situation where a clarification of aims and direction is required by all who work in and are confined by penal institutions. This has provided the need for a new and different approach to penalty - one that accounts for the 'agency' factor in particular prisons and the physical, social and psychological needs of prisoners and staff within these spaces. In the next section I consider the effect such a humanistic and therefore agency-oriented approach to imprisonment has had on current thinking and the practical implementation of policy in the Scottish Prison System.



In the previous sections, I have outlined the ideological and theoretical assumptions behind imprisonment, briefly detailing the development of the prison system as one that is politically, economically, culturally and more relevantly, spatially manifest. I have established the need to be sensitive to these spatial dispersions of penalty, inferring a need for a humanistic and therefore experience-based approach (one that is considerate of individual officers' and prisoners' values, meanings and beliefs attached to the system). I will now emphasise how the system is suffering from a 'crisis' - a 'crisis of legitimisation'. It is here that questions concerning the current approach to penalty have been raised by the recent violent outbursts in prisons, and representations of prison living conditions in the media. Such outbursts have produced calls for a more normalised, rehabilitative approach to punishment - one that removes liberty from the offender as punishment and not for punishment. These outbursts from within the walls of the prisons have therefore produced the need to recognise the potential of agency and the role of the individual within the prison establishment in determining the implementation and outcome of policies and maintenance and continuation of penalty's wider cultural and symbolic representation. The relevance of human agency at the ground level indicates the need to harness this potential as a means of progressing and stabilising the current system.

The 'locale' therefore becomes the pivotal point in this discussion: the spaces of the prison which manipulate and are manipulated by human interaction and social relations. Such an approach will be attentive to the role of human agency and require a more diagnostic analysis, with an inherent need to understand the manner in which theory is translated into policy and, more relevantly, practice. This section is, in essence, an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and the implementation of the resultant policy at the ground level. It will emphasise the relevance of current policy (particularly Sentence Planning) and its aim of re-establishing autonomy for the authorities through the reassertion of social values and relations between offenders and prison staff.



In order to understand fully the development of this crisis of legitimation, it is necessary to detail its development from the mid-twentieth century. This will allow the reader to appreciate the precise shifts in policy in Scotland from the beginning of this period, which served to initiate challenges to current thinking and produce an approach based upon the social relations operating within and through the spaces of the prison establishments. This section will attempt to detail historically the development of the penal system in Scotland in this period, emphasising the relevance of the social, political, economic and cultural factors discussed in the previous section which have shaped the design and use of prison space and at the same time, asserting the importance of the role of human agency operating at the ground level. It will emphasise the degree to which the relevance of these wider issues are themselves constrained and enabled by the actions of those individuals actually experiencing and controlling the penal system.

The SP<sup>5</sup> has experienced a transition in its social order as a result of political struggles and the need to maintain equilibrium in the prison system. Developments such as the centralisation of control in the 1980s and the shift towards normalisation through strategies such as 'Sentence Planning' were themselves produced by the emerging pressures on the Scottish prison system at that time, in particular overcrowding and the spates of disturbances in individual establishments. This crisis-oriented approach resulted in major power struggles between the bureaucrats (civil servants) and the professionals (prison governors) over ideas on the management and control of prisoners. I will show how these struggles essentially resulted in the authorities reclaiming autonomy over the spaces within the prisons and therefore those prisoners confined within these spaces.

### **Ideological Breakdown**

Penalty was for many generations dominated by "relatively abstract academic thinking" (McManus: 1995; p.4). The emergence of the social sciences determined a more practical and philosophical approach, with emphasis being placed upon the individual as both recipient of punishment but more relevantly as a catalyst to its introduction, legitimation and existence. The 1960s saw the endorsement of an orthodoxy in penal policy

based upon identification with the causes of crime and the need to 'treat' individuals for such anti-social behaviour. The over-arching political, economic and cultural beliefs of society were endorsed whilst the individual was perceived as 'deviant'. This commanded a complete turn-around in the administration of sentences, with the authorities determining the length of sentence in relation to an individual's response to treatment rather than the previous retributive method of sentencing in accordance to the offence committed (McManus: 1995).

During the period of the 1960s, disenchantment with this treatment system continued to grow in both Europe and the US. The notion that it was necessary to control individuals outside of the social system and 'treat' them became outlandish, complementing concurrent thinking on the overarching and restrictive legislation of the State upon the rights of the individual. As McManus (1995, p.5) states:

"the idea that criminal deviancy could be equated with physical illness and responded to with the same approach ceased to make any sense when it was accepted that criminals were simply people who had been caught, processed and convicted for doing something which Society had decided, at least for the time being, should be defined as criminal."

The idea of the prisoner as a human being was adopted with the distinctive aim of according prisoners' rights rather than privileges during their sentences (these issued in relation to their response to treatment). During this period, discretion for the provision of further privileges lay with the Secretary of State:

"The basic assumption was that on admission to prison, the subject lost all rights. Anything then granted to him (sic) was a privilege, to which there was no entitlement and refusal of which thus gave rise to no legitimate complaint" (McManus: 1995 p.7).

Alongside this, the UK signing the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, prisoners were given opportunities to raise their cases, to the extent that such outcomes had important implications for policy implementation (McManus: 1995 - Case: *Campbell and Fell v. U.K* (1982) 5 E.H.R.R. 207; (1984) 7 E.H.R.R. 165). This shift in thinking towards the idea of a prisoner as a human being requiring

basic rights had important implications for the development of penal policy in Britain and more importantly for the practical implications of the implementation of these policies at the ground level.

As emphasised in the previous section, in 1979 the May Inquiry concluded that the idea of treatment and training had to be replaced. A new approach was advocated - that of 'positive custody'. In the light of this report, working parties were set up, although there seemed little urgency to their recommendations (Adler and Longhurst: 1994). However, two factors determined a more productive response, both having important spatial implications for penal policy. In 1985 there was a sharp increase in the prison population. In 1986 the average daily population was the highest ever recorded (5,588). The number of determinant sentences of more than three years and of life sentences also surged. As already established, such increases had obvious implications for the utilisation of space within establishments and for the regime and privilege based progression system. The movement of prisoners through the prison system was being slowed down by the sheer number of offenders. The Scottish Prison Service had (and continues to have) limited control over the number of offenders committed to prison. As discussed in the previous section, the volume of prisoners has always had important implications for the implementation of any penal strategies.

The second development sought to aggravate this spatial crisis. With the increasing professionalism of prison staff, and a perceived need for shift in the role officers played in prison from 'turnkey' to 'councillor' endorsed by the May Committee, disenchantment between staff as to what was actually expected of them began to seep into the forefront of administration within the prison system (Cavadino and Dignan: 1992). Cavadino and Dignan (1992) emphasise how relevant these changes were to the prisoners and their behaviour. The transition of ideology and the disequilibrium it created due to unrest amongst staff as to their roles and job specifications, culminated in a series of disturbances in Scotland in the late 1980s (Peterhead, Shotts). Major damage was done to the fabric of these establishments, this again having spatial implications for accommodation of prisoners coupled with the need for effective security and control at all times.

The need for legitimation was paramount. Government sources presented evidence to suggest the work of a hard-core of troublemakers (Assessment and Control: 1988), whilst prisoners' references to their experiences inside intimated poor quality living and visiting conditions (The Roof Comes Off - undated). It was apparent that the quality, design and utilisation of space within these establishments had had important implications for the implementation of policy from the centre. The spaces of the 'locale' therefore became arenas for a demonstration of prisoners' frustrations, these outbursts having catalytic ramifications for the development of a new and defined approach to penalty. As McManus stated: "it was clear that something had to be done to give prisoners a sense of direction" (McManus 1995, p.11).

### **'Custody and Care'**

After many such attempts to administer blame, particularly after the spatial segregation of the hardened core of prisoners which did little to prevent the following outbursts, the SPS established a new plan of attack, one that paved the way for a complete re-appraisal of custody in Scotland. In March 1988, 'Custody and Care' heralded a new and more open approach to imprisonment. Its initial aim was to "guide the regimes and management of individual establishments" (Custody and Care 1988 1-1). It emphasised the promotion of security and control alongside the preservation and protection of the self respect of prisoners, where "vigilance will be improved by sound, constructive relationships and a positive sense of community within the establishment" (1-1). It continues: "Indeed, security and control are likely to be improved when staff and inmates communicate well" (2.8). The document focused on the individual and his/her experience in prison within a socio-cultural environment of its own. It viewed imprisonment as a progressive system, emphasising the need to recognise both the micro and macro environments and thereby smoothing a prisoner's entrance and exit from prison. Such an approach was indeed wide ranging - it provided a different view - a type of coping strategy with emphasis upon social relations and, more importantly, the experience of the individual prisoner in prison. Furthermore, it restricted its focus to individual establishments, marking a distinctive change from previous overall system-based approaches. As the document states:

“The life of the institution must provide the routine and discipline needed to retain custody of inmates but it should also stimulate a positive contribution and response from inmates” (2.9).

It based such an approach on the need for equilibrium within establishments, emphasising the role of officers and governors in maintaining this equilibrium through attaining knowledge of their prisoners. The role of the individual again became paramount in relation to the recognition of the experiences of prison life for both prisoners and officers:

“The appropriate balance of elements of the task is a matter of judgement based on experience, specialised advice, perception of the risk or positive potential of inmates, and availability of facilities or resources” (2.12)

In addition to this approach, ‘Custody and Care’ also examined the classification system of prisoners and made several proposals:

- i] To have regime prospectuses drawn up for each establishment and made available to all prisoners;
- ii] To introduce ‘Sentence Planning’ and encourage continuous dialogue between prisoners and staff. This suggestion was coupled with the proposal for regime plans for individual establishments to ensure ‘parity of regimes’;

### **‘Grand Design’ : Centralisation of autonomy**

The above approach, focusing on the role of the individual within prisons arose from the outcome of the strategy ‘Grand Design’. This policy was formulated by Headquarters to cope with the ever-increasing prisoner population. It was a direct strategy aimed at re-evaluating the utilisation of space in prisons as a means of relieving the social pressures and associated problems arising from overcrowding within the establishments. Prisoners were being categorised and sent to prisons in the knowledge that it was unlikely that they would ever reach their destination. The increase in the number of sex and drug offenders, the spate of hostage takings and incidents, seriously curtailed any spatial room for manoeuvre for prisoners. As Adler and Longhurst (1994) state:



"One response of the Scottish Prison Service to these sorts of pressures was to transfer some of the spare capacity which existed in Young Offenders' Institutions to the overcrowded adult long-term prison system.....two prisons, Dumfries and Greenock (which had only recently opened as a prison for adult LTPs), became Young Offenders Institutions (YOIs), while two YOIs, Glenochil and Noranside, became adult long-term prisons. This and the opening of Shotts Phase II, altered the situation considerably and greatly relieved the overcrowding." (p.71)

However, the strategy suffered particular symbolic problems in that it changed the identity of establishments for both staff and prisoners. Individual establishments were no longer rated in terms of facilities available or regimes in operation, but in terms of the numbers of prisoners they could securely accommodate for the effectiveness and efficiency of the system as a whole.

Problems were also produced by the anxious manner in which 'Grand Design' was implemented and by what Adler and Longhurst (1994) establish to be the lack of co-operation between governors who were not interested in giving it a chance.

Coupled with this, the strategy 'Grand Design' and the hostage-taking incidents had resulted in a large number of transfers between establishments, as a means for governors to cope with the spatial constraints of their prison establishments. In effect, this provided Headquarters with a reason to assert control over the establishments - to effectively reduce the autonomy of individual governors and restrict the freedom available to them to decide where prisoners could be sent. Clearer guidelines were necessary - the so called 'professional opinion' of governors had determined where and when prisoners would be moved. Transfers became a contentious issue as:

"governors perceived their professional discretion and authority to be under attack and believed that this was one of the main causes of institutional unrest, whereas civil servants believed that the activities of governors who arranged transfers without the knowledge and approval of Headquarters had actually led to the unrest and therefore needed to be curtailed." (Adler and Longhurst: 1994; p.89)

The autonomy available to governors therefore has had important implications for the implementation of central government penal policy. It



essentially highlights the relevance of the nature of the social and political relations within each establishment and between establishments<sup>5</sup>. These had important ramifications for both the physical and social environment of the prison. Factors such as 'Grand Design' and the shift in the nature of prisoner transfer policy therefore had important implications for the disgruntlement of prisoners. 'Grand Design' had removed the hierarchy of establishments in existence and muddled their identities in relation to the types of prisoner accommodated. The progression system of the past, reliant upon resources and opportunities available to prisoners had been replaced by a crisis-oriented system aimed at shuffling prisoners around in order to produce a snug accommodation 'fit'. In effect, the quality of the spaces of the prison (the micro-environments) had been superseded in importance by the quantity of spaces available in the system (the macro-environment). The series of disturbances in the long-term prisons in Scotland during the late 1980s is viewed by both Adler and Longhurst (1994) and Coyle (1991) as developing as a result of a number of factors (changes to parole regulations, the drug-culture in these long-term establishments), but has primarily been blamed on the jeopardisation of stability within these prisons, created by the redistribution of prisoners, resulting from the strategy 'Grand Design'.

### **'Assessment and Control'**

In the same individualistic vein, the discussion paper 'Assessment and Control' set out to endorse the commitment established in 'Custody and Care'

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<sup>5</sup>The Ragen administration of the 1960's in Stateville Penitentiary provides evidence of such autonomy and the manner in which it can run out of control. Such a situation could not occur in Scotland due to the overarching scrutiny of the Prison Inspectorate. Joseph Ragen was placed in charge of Stateville in 1936. During his thirty years rein, he transformed the prison into an "efficient parliamentary organisation" (Jacobs: 1977, p.29). He demanded absolute loyalty from his staff and subjected inmates to strict rules and regulations which covered all parts of prison life. He disregarded the knowledge of sociologists and psychologists and classified his inmates in accordance with his control ethics. On leaving Stateville, the prison attempted to retain the same organisation and regulation of inmates with the employment of Frank Pate, a guard in Stateville under the Ragen administration. However, the charismatic qualities of the 'old boss' could not be followed and once again, the inmates began to dictate proceedings. As Jacobs states "While the Pate regime faithfully carried on the Ragen legacy, the inmate population no longer fully acquiesced in the legitimacy of official authority" (p.58). Links with the outside (which had been prevented under Ragen) were re-established this resulting in adoption of the civil rights movement from the streets within a prison which had already changed to a black majority.

towards violent and disruptive prisoners. Its aim was to invoke better management through assessment by:

“identifying early those inmates who may be prone to violent or disruptive behaviour and ensuring that appropriate resources are directed towards resolving the problems which may lead them to engage in such behaviour”

and control ensuring the availability of:

“adequate procedures and facilities to minimise the effect of such behaviour, when it does occur, on other inmates and on staff” (p.1).

In the report, explanation for the disruptions therefore lay with the individual prisoner. Its aim was to provide a profile of the type of prisoners who were violent and disruptive individuals, and who would therefore display characteristic features such as a hostile attitude to authority; suffer from peer group pressure; an inability to come to terms with their sentence; drugs and/or a personality disorder. The SPS were now given the task of identifying these traits in prisoners and segregating them from the mainstream.

Proposals were made for a new maximum security unit for sixty prisoners at Shotts Prison. It is apparent that individual prisoners are recognised specifically in relation to the manner in which they react to the prison environment. Such a behaviourist approach determines how space is utilised by the system. The segregatory methods are inherently knee-jerk reactions and ‘Assessment and Control’ exacerbated this. In doing so, it also endorsed two very different types of prison system for those disruptive prisoners - one of lock-down as at Inverness (The Cages, now closed) and Peterhead (G Hall) and the units at Barlinnie and Shotts. As King (1994 p.50) indicates, the system is inherently schizophrenic, not only in terms of the regimes implemented, but in relation to the utilisation of space within a so called ‘overarching’ control ethic.

In essence, what the ‘Assessment and Control’ strategy proposed, actually undermined the discourse of normalisation found in ‘Custody and Care’. Many of the proposals outlined in the ‘Assessment and Control’ document signalled an increased reliance on strategies of control. As Adler and

Longhurst (1994) indicate, taken together, both documents heralded a greater emphasis on control within the system and a more centralised and bureaucratic approach.

“Overcrowding and the volatility of Scottish prisons gave the centre the opportunity to take control of the SPS” (p.224)

### **‘Opportunity and Responsibility’**

The ideas of ‘Assessment and Control’ were dropped in 1990 with the introduction of ‘Opportunity and Responsibility’ (1990, p.47). This was due to criticisms directed at the manner in which the ‘Assessment and Control’ proposal promoted “an ethos which relegated prisoners to little more than the objects of a management process” (p.47, para 2). ‘Opportunity and Responsibility’ highlighted the relevance of the individual in the implementation of any control mechanism and recognised a need for smaller units within the entire long-term prisoner population. This was an important ideological shift, away from the management of a few for overall control (or what was perceived as for the ‘good’ of the majority), towards an attempt to place emphasis on prisoners as a whole.

Furthermore, ‘Opportunity and Responsibility’ endorsed a spatially deterministic approach where space could be utilised not only to control prisoners physically but also socially, through better inter-personal relations in the prisons between prisoners and officers. The spaces of the prison were no longer to be viewed as a medium for control through segregation, but as an arena for control through communication. It marked a move towards recognising individual prisoners as human beings with their own personal experiences, attitudes and identities of and within the prison system. As ‘Opportunity and Responsibility’ states:

“The move towards smaller regimes within the mainstream will have a number of advantages, including:

- greater flexibility within the system to accommodate the needs of the Service at any point in time;
- greater flexibility to accommodate the changing needs of small groups of prisoners with similar problems;

- greater opportunity for inter-personal relationships between prisoners and staff and between prisoners and prisoners (it is clearly very difficult for staff to develop relationships of trust and support when they are handling large groups of prisoners);
- greater opportunity for prisoners to feel that the system has given personal recognition to them and to their problems." (p.50, para 12)

This may certainly be viewed as a 'quality of life' statement from the Scottish Office. The document does not promise large scale investment and refurbishment of the system for its implementation, but intends to utilise the facilities available:

"Our aim will be to achieve the move towards smaller regimes by more efficient use of our existing resources" (p.51 para 13)

Such claims must obviously be scrutinised as lessons in creativity and, at the first implementation of such a policy, they have tended to produce a greater control ethos within prison establishments. In the long-term case-study prisons, Peterhead, Shotts and Perth, progress has been made in relation to smaller working units within halls (by the incorporation of such ideas in different levels of the halls/flats) and more 'people respondent regimes'. But such zones continue to remain very much part of the hall, attentive to its daily goings on and the overall atmosphere within the hall. These regimes seem to be largely dictated by a more efficient deployment of dining, recreation and visiting facilities between floors. Relations between staff and prisoners are encouraged by the delegation of particular staff to particular floors in order to build upon interpersonal relations between them and to create a more stable and relaxed environment.

Some prison establishments are already accommodating prisoners within discrete regimes in single halls (Peterhead). This involves operating restricted, protection and assessment areas in one hall, endorsing a more community-oriented approach, encouraging prisoners to recognise themselves as being part of a team within a 'progressive' system based on an awareness of the 'group' and encouraging good behaviour for the good of the 'group'. As will become apparent in later chapters with the implementation of 'Sentence Planning', such an ideological shift is viewed as a move towards increased

control, utilising the idea of smaller prisoner numbers and a more trustworthy environment to foresee and prevent future disruptions. Here, it becomes evident that space can be utilised psychologically through attention being paid to individuals and the endorsement of better communication and relations between staff and prisoners.

However, the major aim of 'Opportunity and Responsibility' was not merely a spatial re-organisation of the prison estate (and its resulting psychological implications). It heralded an ideological shift towards the ethos of the responsible prisoner. This was hinted at in 'Custody and Care', alongside security and control factors and is developed further in this policy document:

"Whilst we believe that the primary responsibility of the Scottish Prison Service is to maintain secure custody and promote internal order, we also believe that the Service has a duty to provide for the prisoner a humane environment, within which he has an opportunity to make decisions about the progress of his sentence. The corollary is that the prisoner should find himself in a situation in which, in exercising choice, he is expected to face the consequences of his decisions" (Opportunity and Responsibility p.18 para 12).

In essence, the prisoner is to be recognised as an individual capable of exercising choice. Responsibility is the endorsement of an individual's sense of self-conscience. It emphasises the prisoner's need to view his/her role as part of society, (regardless of his/her current situation), and being responsible for his/her behaviour as an individual within this larger social group. Such responsibility is reflected in an increased need for prisoners to develop trust in others, with a particular emphasis being placed on the improvement in reciprocal relationships with staff.

It is apparent that prisoners have always possessed the ability and right to exercise decision-making within the prison system, but this has usually been in a manner incongruent with the perception of prisoner rights at that time. This new approach reveals a change in attitude by the authorities which presumes prisoners are not 'deviant' or constantly attempting to escape, disrupt or re-offend. It re-evaluates prisoner contributions to imprisonment. However, as will become apparent in Chapter V, its purpose has not been fully endorsed by those at the forefront of its implementation - prison officers.



It is their attitude towards these changes which is in serious need of assessment, if the idea of the 'responsible prisoner' is to be given any credibility as a successful system (Chapter VI).

### **'Sentence Planning'**

The idea of the responsible prisoner has been advanced through a new strategy - 'Sentence Planning'. Principal features of the scheme are outlined below (Opportunity and Responsibility 1990 p.30).

6.1 *"Providing information for the prisoner rather than just taking information from him."* This is an attempt to make prisoners aware of where they are in the prison system in terms of their progression status and the options available to them for their protection. Prison establishments are encouraged to design prospectuses and videos to highlight the opportunities available. This may be viewed as a 'carrot and stick' approach by the authorities, inferring how good behaviour within the progressive system can win prisoners privileges.

6.2 *Providing a self-analysis package for the prisoner to work through.* This is aimed at helping "the prison officer and the individual prisoner understand together the significant elements of the prisoner's situation on admission" (p.31). Here personal information is supplied by the prisoner in order to help with any social problems he or she may be experiencing and the ambitions he/she has during the serving of the sentence. Many prisoners have particular difficulties in confiding their thoughts and feelings to officers. Such a strategy is a major shift away from the days of secrecy, uncooperation and the stereotype of the officer as 'turnkey' and 'gatekeeper'.

6.3 *Developing the role of the prison officer as the facilitator.* The implementation of the Personal Officer Scheme has been aimed at training officers to be more effective and responsive to prisoner needs. The Sentence Planning scheme is designed for long-term prisoners serving sentences longer than two years. Each prisoner is designated a 'Personal Officer' who has regular contact with the prisoner. In private meetings between Personal Officers and prisoners, details are recorded of problems



encountered by the prisoner in prison. Advice is also provided on planning sentences and discussions take place on how prisoners can address the issue of offending behaviour. The sentence plan is divided into segments (3 month periods) and within each segment, prisoners are encouraged to consider how their time is to be spent and what goals are to be attained. Again this has required an important shift in attitudes by officers - they have always played the role of facilitator or ambassador for the SPS; what is required of them here, is a more understanding role of prisoners as individuals who are about to progress through the prison system during their sentence, rather than concerns about management control strategies and their role as merely 'custodians'.

#### *6.4 Involving the prisoner in the decision-making processes.*

As detailed above, this gives the prisoner the opportunity to endorse his/her personal preferences and have them recognised as his/her own personal options as to the manner in which he/she serves a sentence. The practical end of the spectrum of 'Sentence Planning' was envisaged as a means to allow prisoners to choose the prison in which to begin their sentence; to choose, for example, a prison close to home, or one with greater opportunities available. On a daily basis, education and vocational training would be considered. As will become apparent, prisoners are particularly sceptical of such a process, particularly in view of the problems associated with the scheme, notably the lack of resources to fulfil the wishes of prisoners and allow them to progress through the system. It is viewed by prisoners very much as a one-sided approach, with emphasis being placed on the prisoner offering information for little more than rhetoric. As McManus (1995) indicates:

"Whereas the old perception of the prisoner under the treatment model was of an irresponsible or "sick" person who needed to be helped by the staff within a regime which denied choices to prisoners and imposed internal discipline and restrictions on contact with the outside, more calculated to isolate people from the real world than prepare them for reintegration into it, the new stresses that prisoners are still human beings, albeit with their freedom temporarily restricted on account of their own actions or alleged actions" (p.13).

6.5 *The process will be continuous..*

Here 'open reporting' is encouraged where the prisoner and Personal Officer will meet regularly "to discuss progress". This is reviewed annually. Evidence from this study (Chapter V and VII), and reports by the SPS (1992; 1994c) emphasise the difficulties experienced by both prisoners and staff in confiding in one another for purposes of open reporting.

In total, two consequences result from this policy document and the premise of the prisoner as a responsible individual:

"Firstly it focuses on the role of prison staff as facilitators in the process of change and personal development. Secondly, it alters the relationship between prisoners on the one hand and staff and specialists on the other, from a situation where the staff and specialists have complete knowledge and authority over prisoners, to one where staff and specialists exercise only such authority and knowledge as are necessary for security and control, but they respond to prisoners, in relation to the aspects of their personal time and sentence, in a facilitating role in which prisoners exercise greater control over their own lives" (SPS: 1990a p.17).

From this statement it is evident that power is encouraged to shift hands from officers to prisoners, prisoners being provided with greater control over their destiny. Such a premise is ideologically reasonable, and the evidence of my research provides, in part, a critique of how effective this shift in power is.

However, throughout this thesis it will become clear how such an approach may also be viewed as an attempt by the prison authorities to re-identify with the prisoner of today and his/her needs, in order to gain a greater understanding of them and therefore to be able to monitor prisoners' behaviour more effectively for the purpose of effective control by the authorities and legitimisation of their autonomy. 'Opportunity and Responsibility' continues to represent a form of centralisation of control by the bureaucrats in terms of attempting to prevent disturbances and implement a form of 'crisis' management through the introduction of a new 'normalised' social order. It will be emphasised that the use and manipulation of space in prison plays an important role in this, not only in relation to the physical spaces of the prison (the fabric, design, location), but also the social spaces of the prison (where social relations flourish or are restricted) and

symbolic spaces (the meanings attached to particular places and what they represent to prisoners and prison officers as a symbol of their own experiences, interpretations and perceptions). 'Sentence Planning' may be viewed as a strategy aimed at reasserting new social values within the prison, through the production of new territorial values within the establishments. In implementing the strategy, officers are expected to become more approachable in their attitude to prisoners - to confront prisoner anxieties head-on through open discussion and the planning of sentences. In essence, the role of the officer is transformed into one of a 'spatial facilitator', psychologically extending the physical spaces of the prison by attempting to enter into prisoners' personal spaces and initiate relations with them on a one-to-one basis.

Such a strategy has important connotations for both the territorial values and meanings attached to the spaces within the prison, and for the meanings attached to those areas outside of the prisons. By encouraging prisoners to be more open with prison staff and responsible for their sentences, the spatial confines of the prison are extended and viewed as being part of a wider progressive penal system, moving prisoners towards the spaces outside. In theory, such an approach is exciting for both the authorities and prisoners in that it encourages the removal of the restrictive territorial symbols attached to the spaces within the establishments (and in the wider sense in relation to the stigmas attached to particular prisons for their notorious histories and treatment of prisoners) and inspires, in theory at least, social relations to flourish.

It will become evident in later chapters that the practicalities of such a strategy have proven difficult to implement in relation to the lack of resources available. More importantly, the implementation of the strategy has been affected by the manner in which prisoners and staff continue to reassert the stereotypes of the 'other' as a means of asserting control over their own spaces in prison, through acquired knowledge and past experience of how this 'other' operates both socially and spatially.

In this thesis, I will consider to what extent a shift in thinking is required for 'Sentence Planning' to be successful. Prisoners and officers need to re-identify

with the 'other'. Prisoners are required to view officers as adopting a 'caring' role, and officers are to view prisoners as adopting a 'responsible' role. A subsequent change in attitude is necessary in order to produce a more caring and responsible approach. The success of such a strategy will obviously not be immediate. As explained earlier, 'Sentence Planning' originated from the disturbances of the 1980s. Prisoners' and officers' past experiences and personal knowledge will take time to eradicate, these being important determinants of attitude towards and interpersonal relations between both social groups. The relevance of experience must not be underestimated here, as it is this which maintains the current attitude and thinking and which reproduces the stereotypes and socio-cultural environment within the prison.

As will become clear, the approach introduced by 'Sentence Planning', requiring the development of trust between staff and prisoners is too much of an ideological shift to be practical, the role of trust being endorsed in a manner that may be perceived to be considerably one way, that of the prisoner trusting the staff. Case-study evidence in Chapter V reveals how the attitude of staff through their language and references to prisoners reflect their perception of prisoners as 'deviants' and untrustworthy members of society. This has obvious implications for the breakdown of prisoner/staff stereotypes and the development of a more trusting environment in prison. More work is required at this frontier of social relations in the establishments, if a more positive approach is to be implemented and maintained. It is obviously not sufficient enough to presume that a new strategy like 'Sentence Planning' will endorse this and attract an approach by staff based upon identity with the individual as a person unto him/herself. The need to try and challenge the meanings attached to the 'other' and the experiences of prisoners and staff is paramount if any progress is to be made.

## **Conclusions**

It is evident from the above discussion that the penal strategies arising from social and political struggles, both within the prisons and within the service, have had important implications for both the spatial management and accommodation of particular groups of prisoners, and for the development of social relations at the frontier in the establishments. The meanings attributed

to particular establishments were changed and challenged by the 'Grand Design' policy of the late 1980s. The roles of particular establishments are no longer hierarchical or clear cut and have resulted in the removal of a feeling of identity and legitimation within the system. Policy documents such as 'Custody and Care' and 'Opportunity and Responsibility' encourage us to recognise the relevance of social relations to the successful implementation of these strategies. It will become apparent the extent to which relations between prisoners and staff are central to the management of secure, incident-free prisons. Such centrally administered strategies have essentially failed to recognise and identify with individuals and the relationships between them, within the establishments. Staff and prisoners' perceptions of one another are very much based upon 'stereotypes' and the penal policies implemented often fail to recognise these, endorsing and helping reproduce these characterisations. The Scottish Prison Surveys in 1992 and 1994 (Wozniak: 1992;1994) both reveal the extent to which these attitudes are expressions of perceptions emanating from past experiences and occurrences, ones in which individuals have not necessarily been involved, but in which they adopt particular attitudes through observation and memory and an inherent feeling of dissatisfaction with the operation of the system. The surveys emphasise how these perceptions and stereotypes are restrictive as they portray prisoner groups as the 'inflicted' and staff as the 'bad guys'.

Centralisation of control in the late 1980s removed the spatial identities and roles of establishments and their governors. This was imposed as a means of increasing control through a more centralised and clear categorisation of prisoners and a clearer overview of spaces available for particular types of prisoner. However, such an administrative approach failed to take account of the complex social relations operating in prison establishments and their implications for the implementation of policy. This thesis will argue the need to recognise and identify with how prisoners and staff choose to survive and legitimate their positions within the prisons' socio-cultural environment through their inherent need for safety, security and identity. I will explore the possibility that prisoner and staff stereotypes become necessary due to the fact that either group needs to possess what they view as 'knowledge' of the 'other' as a means to understand the 'other' and to protect the real 'self' from the 'other'. Individuals know what to expect from these stereotyped



characters and this subsequently justifies their own attitude and behaviour. Knowledge produces power which therefore legitimates identity and status. This situation constantly reproduces itself in the name of self-preservation, but it does not only have psychological implications. The social groups identifications with one another also reproduce physical boundaries - using the spaces of the prison to reassert autonomy, self worth and a feeling of safety for the 'self' (and therefore as a mechanism by which they can maintain this individuality as a group as well as individuals).

What this suggests is the fact that space in prison is used as a means to avert fear of the 'other' and reassert group identity and autonomy. It is, in essence, used to counter the crisis of legitimation of the 'self' both physically and psychologically. Prisoners associate themselves with particular places in the prison as being their own spaces, where they feel safe and secure and feel reassured of their own identities as individuals. In places where this security is challenged, they lose their sense of individuality i.e. in dining areas (see Chapter VI) and feel out of control and dispossessed of the 'self'. Strategies such as 'Opportunity and Responsibility' and the resultant 'Sentence Planning' have ideologically attempted to break-down the need for this legitimation and security by trying to readjust the balance of responsibility within the ethos of security and control in prison. It has provided prisoners with the chance to utilise their rights more effectively and be seen to be responsible for their actions - responsible in terms of themselves and their peer group as a whole. What the strategy has effectively done however, is not only be over ambitious in relation to the available resources (space in prison etc.), but has also disregarded the relevance of the individual prisoner or officer as a perceptive observant human being with differing abilities to cope in prison as well as differing experiences of prison life (whether real or imaginary) and therefore different attitudes towards the implementation of policies by the authorities. It is this which needs to be practically approached in order to endorse such an ideological orthodoxy. As will be shown in the following chapters, attempts have been made to quantify such crises in the prison system through material, administrative and policy-oriented explanations. Very few have recognised the need to qualify the essence of the individual as a three-dimensional, emotional and observant human being who, whatever his or her role in society (and as dictated by society) as



'gatekeeper' or 'offender', has an individual need to legitimate a position and status in prison as a self-worthy person.

Research for this thesis comprised an examination of six prisons in Scotland, all different in relation to architecture, location and the category of offender they detain. These provided me with a wide range of respondents from particularly different physical and social environments, subjected to different regimes and more importantly distinct forms of spatial control. This enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of the nature of the environments in these prisons, and the relevance of space to prisoners and staff under varying conditions. In the next chapter, I highlight the approach I adopted in carrying out my fieldwork and data analysis, and describe the difficulties I encountered during my studies.

## **CHAPTER III**

### *Methodology*

This chapter will outline the methodologies employed to explore the relevance of space to prison life today. It discusses the problems of gaining access to prisons, designing interviews, talking to prisoners and analysing the data when researching the six Scottish case-study prisons. The chapter will follow through the process of collecting and analysing data, emphasising the relevance of, and the need to be attentive to, the theoretical, ethical and interpretative issues relating to this study. In attempting to examine the manner in which space in prison is used both institutionally (administratively by authorities) and personally (by prisoners), I have gained access to those individuals at the frontier of the prison system (prisoners and staff) who, through their opinions, interpretations and experiences manage to influence and manipulate the practical and spatial manifestation of the prison sub-culture and strategies employed by the authorities.

### **Gaining access to prisons**

Gaining access to the prisons proved particularly problematic. I initially proposed to carry out my field-work in English prisons due to the influence of existing literature on English prisons, the wide variety of prison types and architecture in England and the extent to which these prisons have experienced rioting, industrial relations problems and 'crises' over the past few years. However, for a Ph.D. student, the prison authorities requirements for such a study were prohibitive. The lead time to access was long; the information required at the outset (questionnaire structures, theory and aims of my study) were not available in the few months after commencing my Ph.D.; and the bureaucratic barriers to access therefore seemed insurmountable. I had to reconsider my options. I was already based in Edinburgh and so decided to apply to the Scottish Home Department for access. The prisons in Scotland are different from those in England, but in the end, much better suited to my study. For example, they are all architecturally different, detain particular categories of offenders in particular locations and several of them have experienced rioting. 'Sentence Planning' in Scotland was

also being developed prior to the period of my research and had been implemented for a long enough time period to warrant the study of its effects on prison regimes and social relations in the establishments.

However, even with the benefit of proximity to the Scottish Office, access was not easy. On speaking to the Principal Research Officer (PRO) in charge of research in prisons in Scotland, I was told how policy on allowing students into prison had been changed. Students were no longer granted access due to the potential of over-researching and a genuine concern to avoid turning prisons into 'museums' or 'zoos'. After much pleading and explanation of the aims of my thesis, access was granted. This was due to the innovative nature of the work, the relatively small-scale study I intended to carry out, and my own research experience. I was able to study six prisons in total - Perth Prison (male); Peterhead Prison (male vulnerable and sex offenders); Castle Huntly (male Young Offenders' Institution); Cornton Vale (female all offenders Institution); Shotts Prison (male long-term) and Shotts Unit (male, violent prisoners) (see Figure One - p. 97). After consideration of the time allocated for my study and to prevent limited damage to the governors' good-will, it was jointly agreed (by myself and the PRO) to interview five prisoners, five officers and two governors in each establishment.

This level of access had taken over a year to achieve and the struggle was not yet quite over. Every time I required access to particular prisons, I had to gain access through the Scottish Office. This was always slightly frustrating as I was often made to wait for the optimum moment to request access. Prison governors seemed particularly agitated by the request for any type of research in their prisons, whether it be from an outside source as myself, or internal work by the Scottish Office Research Unit. The Principal Research Officer therefore felt it necessary to wait until something could be 'traded off' between the respective prison and the research unit in return for allowing me into the respective prison. This took up a lot of time. Access to Shotts and Perth Prison was further complicated by rioting and subsequent 'lock-down' situations in the prisons (keeping prisoners in their cells for most of the day and restricting all association), whilst access to Cornton Vale was very nearly prevented altogether due to personal communication problems between the research unit and the prison governor.

Figure One: Case-Study Prisons: Scotland



Geographically, prisons (especially those located as a consequence of decisions often made over one hundred years previous) are usually situated in more remote areas for issues of security. This posed particular problems for me as I had to rely on public transport to travel to the prisons. This had obvious connotations for my time schedule as some transport timetables (particularly to Perth and Shotts) were very infrequent. I chose to stay in Peterhead and Castle Huntly purely due to distance from Edinburgh and distance of the prison from the station. Another reason for this is that it was usually necessary to start interviewing by 9 a.m. precisely, in order to fit in with the prison regime and routine.

Once access had been gained, I considered the key issues to be explored. My aim was to examine the relevance of space in prison: to analyse how it is used and the meanings attached to this use by prisoners and officers. In order to do this, given my interest in the role of human agency, it would be necessary to speak personally with prisoners and members of staff. On discussions with the Prison Research Unit at the Scottish Office, it was made apparent that the only way to do this would be through structured interviews in the prisons. Ethnographic research was not allowed for reasons of safety for myself and the fact that the Scottish Office was not willing to allow an outside researcher such freedom in both male and female establishments. Personal interviews were the only option available and for these I had to have a structured set of questions ready to deliver and for analysis by the research unit and all respective prison governors. This was done so as to ensure that my intentions were 'honourable' and that my research project was non-confrontational and would not cause problems with prisoners or staff. A theoretical dilemma was posed by the requirement for non-confrontational material. The nature of my work would expose the nature of the power structures and relationships at work within establishments. I therefore had to ensure that the way in which my questions were structured on paper would, to all intents and purposes, appear to be requiring descriptive answers from my interviewees. The nature of my interviews were semi-structured in format - more searching information could therefore be sought once I had broached a subject with the relevant prisoner, officer or governor. It was important for me and the aims of the study to take advantage of the unique opportunity I had been provided with to interview prisoners and staff alone in their establishments, and to

therefore gauge a true indication of the power structures operating within this confined socio-spatial environment.

### **The Questionnaires**

The challenge in designing the questionnaires was to explore the theoretical propositions posed by the study by focusing on the replies of individual respondents. The questionnaires were not used on a random sample of prisoners, and so the aim in designing them was not to make generalisations about prison life, but rather to give individuals an opening to express and explain the meaning and use of prison spaces from their own point of view. The questions had to be designed for depth rather than breadth. They had to be flexible enough to capture the experience of different categories of offenders and officers. Any references to and opinions of the social and symbolic spaces of the prison would be reliant on an individual's perceptions and experiences of the physical spaces of the prison (its internal design, layout and use of space), as well as on prisoners' experiences from life outside of the prison walls.

The aim of my questionnaires was to examine the manner in which both prisoners and staff utilise and manipulate the spaces they exist in together as a means of survival and a need to feel safe. This was obviously a very difficult subject to broach directly. It was therefore necessary to frame my questions in a format and language which would be acceptable and easily understood by both prisoners and staff. I wanted to gain access to prisoners' and officers' individual personal experiences in prison and their interpretations of prison life. I therefore based my questions around the daily regime, highlighting specific areas of the prison and attempting to analyse respondents' feelings towards actually being in these areas, and monitoring their perceptions of the type of social interaction occurring in these spaces between prisoners and staff. In essence, I aimed to gain a snapshot of respondents' interpretations of particular places at particular times and of how these interpretations affected their own feelings and behaviour towards one another within these spaces.

My work uncovered strong stereotypical attitudes between staff and prisoners, as was of course expected. These confrontational attitudes did not



always appear to have arisen from individuals' own experiences of antagonism from staff and/ or prisoners, but from hearsay and original impressions of prison life and the nature of social relations between staff and prisoners. It became apparent that both prisoners and staff used these expected behavioural stereotypical values to shape and essentially determine the manner in which they perceived their own situation and legitimated their own position within the prison social hierarchy, this having a profound effect on their behaviour towards one another. It became clear that the regulations pertaining to this form of behaviour have been established for a long time; it is up to the individual to carve a personal identity and therefore 'niche' for him/herself around these regulations as a means to exist and survive.

My approach to this study was therefore as both 'facilitator' to the data and an 'interpreter' of the data - accessing and recording prisoners' and officers' views, bringing them to the attention of those outside of the prison perimeters and analysing their meanings. The need to retain context became paramount as a means to provide a true representation of the feelings and opinions of prisoners and staff at the frontier of the prison system. This subsequently determined the manner in which the entire study was carried out and the data analysed. In analysing the relativity of space in prison and the meanings attached to it, it became possible to maintain this context: such sensitivity to personal experience determined the need for an individualistic approach: one considerate of feelings and perceptions of individual prisoners and staff within the social and physical confines of the prison.

My questionnaires therefore had to cover a wide range of factors relating to issues both within and without the prison perimeter as a means of developing a clear understanding of the individual and his/her spatial living patterns. I wanted to be able to identify with the many different attitudes and perceptions held by prisoners and staff towards the spaces they live in as a means of infiltrating their shared physical and psychological living experience. As a consequence of this, my questionnaires were wide ranging in subject matter and had to swap and change subject with regularity. But this often proved beneficial. Many prisoners found it a challenge to relay their hopes, fears and feelings to a person from the outside who was actually genuinely interested in all their experiences and perceptions of prison life.

Time was precious, and in order to stimulate as many ideas and raise as many issues as possible, such irregularity actually proved positive and to my advantage. I wanted initial, straight and honest reactions to my questions; I did not want staff and prisoners to use me only as a 'sounding block' for their own personal angst, but to react immediately and truthfully to my questions and to relate their true feelings to me without consciously structuring their answers. A few prisoners and officers were adamant about their attitude towards my questions and therefore stilted in their responses. This was to be expected. Some were uneasy about my intentions and methods of recording (as explored below), and therefore tailored their responses to suit. It would obviously have been beneficial to gather my information over a longer time span and to get to know, in-depth, particular prisoners and officers as a means to develop even further the quality of my findings. However, the parameters of my study-allowance in prison determined that this was not feasible and I therefore had to tailor my methods to suit my 'facility time'.

Standardisation of questions was not always guaranteed to be constant when interviewing respondents. The intention to access the views, opinions, experiences of prisoners and officers through their own interpretations and language was bound up with the acquisition of face-to-face information. In several cases I had to reword questions in order that the respondent was clear as to the information required. Additionally, in being face-to-face with respondents in cells or governor offices, I was able to record "the context of the interview and the non-verbal gestures of the respondent" (May: 1995, p.74) and account for the individuality of the data collected.

My questionnaires took the form of semi-structured interviews. To produce a questionnaire for the purposes of interviewing under restrictive conditions and within tight time constraints proved difficult. The end result may be seen in Appendix I. I initially wrote the questionnaire including all subjects I wanted to cover. I then rewrote it in such a way that key questions were to be asked and, where possible, follow-up questions given. The number of questions asked relied heavily on my own interpretation as to how much time was available during each interview, the extent to which I felt I could get away with extending the interview and how willing individuals were to

speak to me. I was therefore acutely aware of my ability to shape and manipulate the way in which interviews turned out. As Fowler states:

“Because of the central role they play in data collection, interviewers have a great deal of potential for influencing the quality of data they collect” (1988, p.107).

All four questionnaires had to be reread and commented on by the Principal Research Officer at the Scottish Office. I was provided with help in structuring questions in such a way as to make them coherent and clear for staff and prisoners and to not be too controversial in an attempt to prevent antagonism.

### **A Pilot Questionnaire?**

May (1995) emphasises the need for a pilot questionnaire in order to seek out any major problems with responses and meaning. As Kidder (1981) indicates:

“The pretest provides a means of catching and solving unforeseen problems in the administration of the questionnaire, such as the phrasing and sequence of questions or its length” (p.162)

In the case of this study, time and available prison resources were my main constraints. I did not therefore produce a pilot study per se. On eventually gaining entry to the prison establishments, I was provided with access to four prisons within two months. Peterhead was the first prison studied and acted as a ‘barometer’ for the ‘success’ of my questionnaire. It was essentially a learning process - I realised the ambiguity of some of my questions and the need to provide prisoners and officers with the necessary information with regards to the specific aims of my research. From the responses it became clear that both social groups were sensitive to their own need to feel they were providing the ‘correct’ answer: that there was an absolute ultimate response which I was looking for. Goffman refers to this as ‘ritual interchanges’ and as Silverman emphasises, this involves:

“whether what is being said is compatible with recipients’ views of the speaker and of themselves” (1985, p.131).

This required my approach to be slightly informal - to place the interviewee at rest and encourage him/her to relate to me their impressions and opinions of prison life. As McCracken (1988) states:

“Whatever is actually said in the opening few minutes of the interview, it must be demonstrated that the interviewer is a benign, accepting, curious (but not inquisitive) individual who is prepared and eager to listen to virtually any testimony with interest. Understandably, {interviewees} are not keen to reveal very much about themselves, or to take a chance with an idea, if there is any risk of an unsympathetic response. {Interviewees} must be assured that the potential loss-of-face that can occur in any conversation...is not a grave danger in the present one...It is better here to appear slightly dim and too agreeable than to give any sign of a critical or sardonic attitude” (p.38).

Throughout all my study prisons, questions were re-structured on-the-spot, in an attempt to help the individual feel comfortable with the responses they gave. Before interviewing the respondents, it was further necessary to outline the proposed aims of my research - what I intended to study and how I intended to go about it. This was necessary:

“No-one who has carried out research in institutions can have avoided the salesman situation. If the researcher is to sell his goods at all then he needs to provide a clear specification of what these goods are and why they are needed” (Elliott and King: 1977, p.39).

I commenced my questionnaires with “classification questions” (May: 1995, p.77) related to personal information on the prisoners and officers as to their age, how long they had been imprisoned/ employed by the prison system etc. (see Appendices I, II and III). May (1995) establishes that asking these questions at the beginning of an interview may put the respondent off as “they may fail to see the need of them” (p.77). In my case, the questions actually encouraged the respective prisoner or prison officer to speak to me: relating information they knew and felt sure about. Trust and confidentiality became major hurdles in this study, the need for me as a researcher to sell myself as honest and reliable and as a researcher who was not trying to ‘catch-out’ respondents, was central to my approach.

I followed on with ‘grand-tour’ questions (Spradley: 1979) which asked respondents to outline general characteristics of their social and physical

environment. These were of the 'non-threatening' variety (Cook and Crang: 1995) and were designed once again to place respondents at ease, encourage them to relax and for myself to inject a degree of trust and acceptability into the interview process. These usually took the form of 'Describe a typical day to me' for prisoners and 'What do you think of the security in this prison?' for officers and governors. Whilst carrying out the interview, it was important to keep the conversation going - to listen and respond to what the person was saying and to resist the temptation to interrupt during accounts and stop the flow of information (Cook and Crang: 1995).

My questions were structured in such a way as to remain open-ended and therefore worded so that respondents could interpret their responses themselves. Again it is necessary to emphasise that I was interested in prisoners, officers and governors feelings about the prison - to gain insight into what the spaces of the prison (and the manner in which they are used) mean to them individually and as part of a group. Comparability of responses (as mentioned earlier) was an important factor for me, in relation to my analyses of final results, but not to the detriment of the responses through the compartmentalisation and therefore generalisation of fixed replies (May: 1995). The nature of the aims of this study, in accessing the personal views and life experiences of the respondents would produce responses that would be vastly interpretative and reliant on the interviewee's own experiences and interpretation of questions, as well as their perception of the expected response they felt required to give. What I ultimately learnt from collecting the data was how important it was to listen to respondents; to record their every word and be attentive to the manner in which they answered questions, rather than the purely factual response. The quality of data was more relevant to this study than the overall quantity collected.

### **The Sample**

It is important to realise the difficulties related to interviewing actually inside the prison. Officers and prisoners have to be removed from their work place and prisoners escorted to the interview. This takes time and disrupts the daily regime and routine. It relied very much upon the willingness of governors to allow me into prison and the willingness of staff and prisoners to participate.



Prisoners and staff interviewees were usually chosen by the governors. Again, this was not an ideal situation, but one over which I had limited jurisdiction. The majority of prisoners chosen for interview for this thesis were those who had been in prison for a few years and had managed to gain privileged positions on trust, such as passmen.<sup>1</sup> Prisoners' past behaviour and attitude deemed them competent in the staff's view to be interviewed. Prisoners were hand-picked according to the extent to which officers personally trusted them and the amount of information it was perceived they would provide. Whether this was purely in accordance with the degree to which these prisoners would not pose a safety threat to me as a female researcher from outwith the system, or was a consequence of the governors and staff knowing the respective prisoners' attitudes towards the system to be some-what softened and less critical than first-time offenders (due to lengthy sentences, the nature of their privileged positions and acceptance of their sentences), was not clear. Consequently my sample cannot be viewed as 'random' or representative, but it does mean that information was provided by and large by those with most experience of prison life.

My sample of prisoners is therefore made up of individuals who have served a large portion of their sentence. In Shotts and Perth prisons I was allowed to request prisoners from particular halls, although once again these were usually passmen and prisoners approaching the end of their sentences. This had important implications for the form and quality of the information collected. The majority of interviewees had strong views about the prison system which were not necessarily derogatory or challenging, but encouraging and constructive. Responses were not grudges against the system, as would be expected from my own perception of a stereotype 'prisoner', but constructive criticisms based upon the prisoners' experience and interpretation of the prison environment. These respondents were, in the majority of cases, easy to speak to; they had experienced all forms of the prisonisation process and had developed their own interpretations of the trials of prison life. They were able to draw on past experience in order to devise ways to exist safely and securely. They had learned to use the prison rules in order to move through the system towards the outside. Thus, many

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<sup>1</sup> This job involves making tea for the governor and formal visitors and keeping particular areas such as staff toilets and corridors tidy.



of the prisoners interviewed had been promoted to positions of trust, such as Passmen or Librarians. This is an example of the tactics of the weak manipulating the strategies of the strong to their own ends as a means of compressing their time spent in prison and extending their personal spaces through carrying out their daily tasks.

Obviously, the ideal position with regards choice of respondents for this thesis, would have been to have an open choice of prisoners from different halls, with different sentences and time spent inside and therefore a wide range of experiences. Despite the quality of information collected, it was evident that the prisoners I spoke to had strong and established views on the manner in which the prison operated and particularly on the regime and on officers' attitudes towards prisoners. Some of the respondents had experienced the trials of being punished under Rule 36, and obviously all had at some time, experienced the conditions of being on remand. It would have been ideal to have been given the opportunity to gain access to prisoners directly in these situations, but for administrative and safety reasons, this was not deemed feasible by the authorities.

It is obvious from the constitution of the sample of my prisoner interviewees, due to the nature of their sentences and privileged positions within the prison hierarchy, and therefore jobs within the prison, that these prisoners had a wider than average access to the spaces of the prison. Their responses would therefore be somewhat 'skewed' and inconsistent with the interpretations and perceptions expected from those prisoners confined under more restrictive regimes. It is also apparent that only a partial view of prisoners' perspectives is possible. However, this view is that of the more experienced and reflective inmates, whose knowledge of the spaces of prison life is widest and best developed. And although the view is not complete, it does provide a glimmer of something not previously seen. This study attempts to provide a fresh insight into prisoners' and officers' real and interpreted experiences of prison life from within the actual confines of these Scottish prisons.

## The Interview

In all case-study prisons interviews were conducted wherever and whenever was regarded as suitable for staff and prisoners concerned. In most cases interviews took place over 3-4 days in one institution, with approximately five interviews a day. The majority of discussions lasted 25-45 minutes (see Appendix IV) depending upon the time constraints set up by the individuals administering my visit. I usually ran over the time initially allocated, taking care to go over established points and glean further information whenever necessary. That is not to say I lead interviewees to over emphasise particular issues, but encouraged them to embellish upon what they had already stated in their own time. I carefully refrained from rushing my interviewees and encouraged "rapport and intersubjective understandings to develop at a relaxed pace" (Cook and Crang: 1995, p.44).

As explained earlier, initiating a discussion with my interviewees on the use of space in prison proved potentially difficult. My questions were based on the daily regime within the prison, the design of the prison and prisoners' perceptions and experiences within the confines of the prison. Accessing the information in this way proved useful in that it encouraged prisoners to speak openly about their experiences and perceptions of prison life and not only within the context of that specific prison.

On many occasions prisoners were quite willing to speak openly about life in prison on subjects not necessarily linked to my area of study. Of course, all information was relevant to the context of actually existing within the confines of the prison, but some prisoners used this opportunity to air their views on their attitudes to individual members of staff, to incidents in which they had been wrongly accused in the prison, or to explain away their crime. In most instances this information was important, although on two occasions I exercised my judgement to switch off the tape. In Peterhead, a passman related to me, in detail, the sexual crime he had committed and why he had committed it. He was particularly frank about what he had done stating "I didn't mean to rape her - she deserved it; she made too much noise". Such an admission did shock me as I am sure it was intended to and it was at that point that I ended the interview. Perhaps my academic peers would argue

that I should have continued with the interview, but after several attempts to switch conversation topic, I realised it was of little use. Cassell (1988) states the need to:

“adopt a role or identity that meshes with the values and behaviour of the group being studied, without seriously compromising the researchers’ own values and behaviour” (p.97).

She essentially implies how “the most appropriate one {identity} can be stressed”. In this case however, I found it impossible to identify with what the respondent was saying. This incident may be viewed as an example of my own insecurities in being a female ‘outsider’ in a maximum security prison for sexual offenders, and I would certainly agree. The prisoner’s intention was to shock and on reflection I realise that he succeeded. His information filtered through the researcher/respondent barrier as a personal affront, which it was intended to be (Whitehead: 1986).

It is important to recognise the relevance of the prison environment to the execution of these interviews. In this case the interview was conducted in the prisoner’s own cell, in a large gallery-designed hall with prison officers wandering outside the cell, glimpsing in whenever they felt it appropriate. I could have conducted the conversation elsewhere in the staff block, in plush offices over desks (as several of my interviews were conducted), but in this analysis any opportunity to observe and speak to prisoners in their usual environment was an obvious bonus. It must be emphasised that I was never placed in a dangerous situation. Staff would not have permitted it for security and control reasons (this point being of relevance in Shotts Unit as explained later). What it is important to appreciate is that my approach to these interviews, both emotionally and intellectually, as influenced by the context in which the interviews were administered, could have important implications for their final outcome.

In the second incident which resulted in me ending the interview, a female prisoner broke down in tears, relating to me how she had been bullied by fellow inmates because of presumed jealousy over the number of letters she received from her boyfriend each week. The information was particularly personal, and in her concern not to be identified to the authorities as being

upset (in case she was removed from the privileged block to an area where she could be observed more closely in case of suicide attempts - Sierra Block), she requested the tape to be switched off. In this case I became aware of adopting the role of a 'counsellor'. I found this particularly difficult due to the fact I was totally ignorant of how the prisoner felt and of what it was really like to be confined in Cornton Vale. I was aware of the potential to be understanding but simultaneously to come across as patronising, and therefore did not want to be seen to be too 'approachable' or too 'cold'. Attempting to be the ultimate "intelligent, sympathetic and non-judgmental listener" as emphasised by Cassell (1988, p.95) was difficult. I was placed in an awkward situation and had limited ability to do or say anything helpful to her or the authorities. The interviews were confidential and the degree to which I could interfere was restricted.

During all the interviews I it made clear that I was using a tape recorder and promised anonymity and confidentiality to all interviewees. In Peterhead, two prisoners requested that the tape machine be switched off in order to relate how they had been treated under lock-down conditions with the use of body-belts, physical punishment and injections of sedatives. In both cases prisoners chose to give information in hushed whispers. It certainly has to be considered whether such tactics were used to scare me and to play on the fact I was to them, a stereotypical 'student' and 'female' from outside of the system, with limited knowledge of the organisation of the prison. In the same way I had 'conjured' up an image of prisoners as 'dangerous' and 'criminal', they too had an image of me. But it must also be considered how the prisoners were themselves utilising a certain self-preservation approach, one which was unfortunately based on their insecurities about me relating information to officers and the confidentiality of the entire interview. Such an issue needs to be acknowledged. Factors such as where the interview was carried out, how I was initially introduced to the prisoner or officer, and the manner in which I conducted the interview, as well as my own appearance all had important connotations for the degree to which interviewees were willing to 'open up' and confide in me.

During the interviews I took care not to lead the prisoner or officer with my questions. I tried to present the questions without giving any clue as to the

type of answer I might expect. In a few of the interviews (with prisoners particularly), there was a definite need to 'break the ice' and chat informally as it were throughout. Indeed the person employed to transcribe my material noted my seemingly informal approach on several occasions. This was necessary in view of the degree of tension experienced from prisoners who were sceptical of revealing information to a total stranger. All material was transcribed in order to place the interview in context to the person being interviewed and the general atmosphere in the interview room.

### **Recording of information**

All interviews were taped with the permission of respondents and overall clearance from the Scottish Office Research Unit and the respective prison governors. During some of the interviews and whilst the tape was recording, I took observational notes. These contained no interpretation and were an attempt to reconstruct in words, the way in which the prisoner or officer responded to particular questions. These were made only when I felt it appropriate during the interview and particularly after, in order that interviewees were not distracted (Cook and Crang: 1995). This form of note taking was also used when being shown around the prison. In most cases I found it less intrusive than producing a notebook in front of the interviewee or indeed my chaperone. People tended to be more uptight about the written word rather than the recorded word and always tried to see what I was writing, which again distracted them. I often found myself having to memorise and hastily scribble down notes after the interview had finished. This posed a greater problem when being given a tour of the prison, the excuse to go to the toilet being a handy retreat to make observational notes (a symptom referred to by Cook and Crang: 1995 as "ethnographer's bladder" (p. 35)).

I also kept another set of notes - theoretical notes taken in an effort to derive meaning from my observational notes and from the whole experience of being in a particular prison. These I often scrawled on my way home from the prison on the bus or train and during that evening. The in-depth observational notes taken down on my visits to the prisons of my feelings whilst inside, proved particularly helpful. The sounds, people, physical



environment - all these contextual aspects helped conjure up an atmosphere from which to work. Wider and more generalised theorising came about months after my fieldwork had been completed, when I attempted to make overall sense of what had been achieved. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973, p.104) state, these notes "elaborate upon the reference, or tie up several inferences in a more abstract statement".

My fieldwork experience was therefore "continuing and creative". As Okely emphasises:

"....research has combined action and contemplation. Scrutiny of the notes offers both certainty and intuitive reminders. Insights emerge also from the subconscious and from bodily memories, never penned on paper....Writing and analysis comprise a movement between the tangible and intangible, between the cerebral and sensual, between the visible and invisible. Interpretation moves from evidence to ideas and theory, then back again." (1994: 32)

And this is how I found it to be - an on-going process where my knowledge from the literature I had read helped develop my own experiences - physical, psychological and sensual. Such an all-encompassing approach took me into new and interesting literature fields - criminology, psychology, ergonomics. Limited literature was discovered in the geographical realm in relation to the internal environment of the prison and its psychological and physical impact on individuals and relations between them. I admit I felt particularly vulnerable but at the same time exhilarated in having to venture so far outside my own 'geographical boundaries of knowledge'. I researched policy papers relating to prisons in Scotland from a geographical stand-point and was given an opportunity to study plans of prisons whilst in the prisons. Such an experience allowed me to return to my fieldnotes with a fresh approach.

Difficulties were confronted when attempting to maintain a degree of control over sound quality in the interviews. Interviews between myself and prisoners which were allowed to take part in cells were certainly more relaxed affairs in terms of being able to allow the prisoner to relate to me in a more personal manner. These however also had their setbacks in that the accompanying noise in the halls from prisoners and officers shouting at one another often from across the galleries, keys in locks and doors slamming and



reverberating through the hall, made uneasy listening when it came to transcribing the tapes. Our voices sounded distant on tape, the brick floors and ceiling echoing every sound. I was interrupted many times by officers, inconsiderate of the fact I was speaking 'confidentially' to a prisoner, this often placing the prisoner 'on edge' and doing little for the quality of sound on tape.

### **The Interview environment - trust and security**

In those instances where interviews were conducted in offices, this had important implications for the form the interview adopted. A certain degree of formality was immediately imposed, particularly when the office was a governor's office. None of the prisoners or officers would have had reason to enter such premises before, unless it was for a personal meeting between staff, or the prisoner worked as a passman. Most prisoners were particularly conscious of the environment they were placed in - a comfortable chair, carpeted floors and peace and quiet from the main prison. They were certainly aware of a kind of formality, interpreting this as a reflection of me and my position as a researcher. This posed particular difficulties for me in trying to emphasise the confidentiality of my work. It was also important for me to constantly emphasise to the respondent the insignificance of my research in relation to the individual interviewee and the prison system as a whole and to present it as a study unto itself.

This problem of formality was also apparent in relation to officers. Several officers interviewed were unwilling to articulate their ideas in listening distance of the governor or of my tape machine. The main reason was established as being the threat to their job if they were to speak out. This was often frustrating as many of the questions related to their own personal experiences of how space in prison was used, very few requiring damning conclusions on the manner in which the system operated. If and when such statements were made, the tape machine was usually switched off, endorsing complete confidentiality once again.

An important message from the interviews is the extent of the personal insecurities of all those confined by the prison establishments. Both staff and

prisoners were constantly aware of being observed: they all experienced the threat of punishment and this inspired a need for secrecy. As King & Elliott (1977) argue, research in prison represents a "military confrontation between the researcher and the researched" (p.33). As we will see later on in this thesis, the nature of the prison system's new policy initiative, 'Sentence Planning', aimed at encouraging openness and discussion alongside responsibility of an individual for his/her own actions, is not only ideological in format. The manner in which it attempts to employ this new approach fails to recognise the need to challenge and attempt to break the actual culture of the prison. It is also contradictory in that it emphasises the importance of the voice of prisoners or officers, but manages only to recognise the individual prisoner or officer and to reject all that is not relevant to that individual as a member of a particular homogeneous social group. It is, in effect an attempt to 'divide and rule': encouraging debate amongst prisoners and staff but at the same outwardly dismissing it as rhetoric. Hence my experience of secrecy and hushed whispers.

Furthermore, it is important to note how issues of confidentiality and trust may well have hampered my attempts to gain truthful information:

"it is not uncommon for people under the researcher's gaze to feel self-conscious or threatened knowing that anything they say may be "written down and used in evidence against them". It is a good idea to keep in mind the fact that few people, including the researcher, are ever 100% (dis)honest, earnest, flippant, sure what they think, consistent in what they say across all contexts or anything else" (Cook & Crang: 1995, p.26)

As Crick (1992) also emphasises, it is important to always be suspicious of the information related to you as a researcher and to question "why you understand what you understand within the contingent, intersubjective time/spaces of your fieldwork" (Cook & Crang: 1995, p. 27).

On two occasions I was escorted out of the cell mid-interview. The first time was at Perth when I was suddenly interrupted by two officers announcing there was trouble in the hall and I was to leave immediately. On the other occasion, I was taken out to the senior prison officer's office in Shotts prison and my bag searched. It was claimed that a prisoner had reported that I had

taken photographs of him in the cell and of the prison from the window. This was forbidden for security reasons. The officers involved were particularly curt in dealing with me until they realised I did not possess a camera. They then continued to emphasise to me the seriousness of such an offence if I had committed it and how I should never trust any prisoner. With hindsight I recognise the interruption as a certain exertion of the security and control ethos (and an indication that I too could be subject to it) and at the same time a display of power and the re-endorsement of the idea of the 'bad guy' prisoner and 'good guy' officer. The entire incident startled me, and for that day at least, made me more aware of my surroundings, this having an obvious effect on the manner in which I conducted my final interview for the day. I was certainly less relaxed and grateful that my daily schedule was almost at a close.

In Shotts Unit all interviews were conducted in the prisoners' own furnished cells (see Chapter IV for a description of the design and layout of prisons). This was unusual for a maximum security unit and did provide cause for concern for officers in the Unit. After discussion with the Governor I was permitted to continue interviewing in-cell but with constant surveillance from officers. This had occurred before my presence became an issue but only in relation to Security Category 'A' prisoners who require to be observed and checked up on every 15 minutes and a book signed by officers as evidence. From then on I found I was constantly interrupted.

The taking of photographs in the prisons was not (as emphasised above) permitted for security reasons. I was allowed to take pictures of the front the prison but was generally only permitted to take them there and then when permission had been granted and clearance given at the gate. This was usually in the dark whilst trying to grapple with busy main roads in the wind and horizontal rain. Subsequently none of them were printable.

Security getting into prison was, in my experience, unbelievably lackadaisical. My bag was only ever searched once and that was on a separate visit to Shotts with some undergraduates. It was evidently presumed that I was trustworthy from my previous contact with the Principal Research Officer at the Scottish Office. I found this surprising in view of the fact I was conducting interviews

in a maximum security prison, in offices (and often cells) in which I was placed alone with prisoners. This experience provides a strange contrast in relation to the time and effort spent in gaining access to the prisons and having to build up relationships and trust with the prison governors concerned.

### **Relationships with prisoners and staff**

In Shotts Unit I became aware of the risk of becoming too involved with prisoners due to the freedom I was given to walk around and chat with individuals. I struck up a certain friendship with one prisoner who decided to give me a leaving gift - a painting of a ship stranded on the shore and awaiting the tide to sweep it away. I found this to be particularly metaphoric and personal to the prisoner and was flattered to receive it framed and signed. However this caused problems in that the Unit governor viewed this presentation as me getting too close to the prisoner and he informed the prisoner in front of me that I was not to take it from the building. It was not regarded as prison policy. I was however eventually allowed to keep it. The governor was still not entirely happy about the situation, putting it down to my gender and the ease with which I approached and chatted to prisoners regardless of their crimes. I found this to be a personal affront and one which I constantly came up against.

During my studies, I had expected comments from prisoners. This was due to my own uncertainties about them and a certain stereotypical view of them. With hindsight I realise this was inconsiderate and incorrect. Comments were shouted as I walked through the prison, usually from younger prisoners but more surprisingly from members of staff. At times I did feel intimidated, particularly when I was taken to the staff canteen at Perth and made to sit amongst fifty or so male members of staff. I did not pass up any opportunity to speak informally with staff or prisoners and to glean information wherever I could, although at times 'nerves of steel' were required to put up with personal comments, none of them malicious but still unwelcome all the same.

### **A casual or formal approach?**

In all case-studies it was evident that my own attitude and dress code (McDowell: 1993) and the manner in which I responded to officers and prisoners, determined how I was treated by them. In my first prison, Peterhead, I chose to dress formally in trousers and jacket. However this dress code seemed to have the adverse effect in stigmatising me as a member of authority and the Scottish Office, the purpose of my visit being viewed as to extract information for unidentified purposes (Thomas: 1993; Cook and Crang: 1995). A certain degree of formality pervaded. Several academics have emphasised the advantages of such an approach and have attempted to deliberately do the 'wrong thing' in the 'wrong place' in order to "try to understand their intricacies and influences" (Cook and Crang: 1995 - also see Giddens: 1984, 1991). In this case I felt it necessary to play down my role - to be seen to be approachable, unconservative and therefore slightly informal. I was not only dealing with the consequences of being a researcher from outside the Scottish Office, but was furthermore made fully aware of my gender. I felt it appropriate to play this down and not wear skirts due to the nature of the environment I was in, surrounded by men who had not necessarily had much contact with women, in some cases for years. I personally felt the need to be and look comfortable and present a confident approach in the restricted environment of the prison.

In Perth I wore black jeans (blue I felt looked too casual) and thick jumpers. This tended to have the effect of emphasising my youth and the fact I was a student. It certainly helped break down barriers with the prisoners but seemed to instil a judgement of inadequacy amongst staff. My background and relative youth was made an issue rather than the purpose of my visit. In the following prisons I chose to wear long skirts and jumpers in an attempt to emphasise a casual yet authoritative approach.

### **The need for an identity**

Whatever the outfit, the word 'student' still reverberated in mine and the officers' ears. In almost all cases I was introduced as a student from Edinburgh University. This certainly helped in establishing a more informal



relationship with prisoners and encouraged them to speak openly. I found it important to emphasise the relevance of the material to myself and the outcome of my thesis. There was no reference to the need for research for future development and change, something which had, as far as the prisoners were concerned, been used too often by the authorities to justify research (particular reference was made to the SPS Prison Surveys :1992 and 1994). Most officers were helpful in answering questions and relating their points of view, although a few were less responsive to my research justifications, viewing my intentions as irrelevant and my visit as unethical. In one case an officer felt I had only gained access into the prisons because I was female and had used my "femininity" to sway the authorities' attitude!

Throughout the fieldwork, my gender inadvertently became an issue and one which I was forced to examine closely. In effect I attempted not to be myself - a woman in a prison - but to attempted to adopt a more 'asexual' role, dressing so as to cover my body and to come across as an authoritative and unemotional individual. In essence the prison social environment enforced a character transition, making me become fully aware of my gender, the way in which I looked, dressed, spoke and acted. I admit I did not feel comfortable in this role in having critically to analyse my own behaviour. I did not feel so pressurised to hide my gender in Cornton Vale Women's Institution due to the fact that all the prisoners and the majority of staff were female. I was more able to be myself, although I still found it useful to try and play down my title of the stereotypical 'student'.

What became clear from all this was the degree to which I was forced to adopt a new identity whilst in the prison - to be attentive to the stereotyped role of the 'researcher'; to identify with it and endorse it as a means of gaining the optimum information. Even when I was knowledgeable of the fact that I would increase the risk of being seen to be retrieving information for the Scottish Office in order to increase knowledge of particular individuals, to re-emphasise the existence and power of the authority and gain further control, I often found it necessary to half-heartedly adopt this role for the purposes of prisoners and staff to identify with me. In order to be accepted within the prison environment I had to fit into a particular stereotyped role. Both



prisoners and staff were generally less wary of me in that my identity and purpose had been legitimated by them.

### **Transcription and Analysis**

The tapes were transcribed over several weeks by myself and a paid Scottish transcriber. This helped overcome some problems in translating some of the accents (particularly Glaswegian). Problems also occurred with the quality of the interview. It was important for me to give the interview in as ordinary a setting as possible to the prisoner to maintain some degree of atmosphere, but this had important consequences for the quality of sound in relation to shouting and the banging of doors outside of the cell (see above).

In analysing the writing up of my data, there were various options available to me. One approach would have been to examine my data prison by prison. However, my concern is with prison establishments and the people who exist within them as part of a wider system. So, a prison by prison approach as well as being repetitive, would have been conceptually restrictive. It is, after-all, the enormity of the system which itself reproduces the nature of the social environments of the prison: establishments are not entities unto themselves. They have their own histories, alongside those individuals within them who possess their own experiences and memories and carry the stigma attached from other prison establishments. The need to generate my fieldwork as a whole was a need to paint a complete picture of the ways in which prison space is utilised and what these spaces represent to the individual prisoners and members of staff.

It would have also been possible to analyse my findings by prisoner category, although similar restrictions would have been imposed on the data to those outlined above, due to the fact that each prison detains different categories of prisoner and types of offender i.e. female prisoners, male long-term prisoners, young offenders and male protection prisoners. The study would once again have risked becoming a list of differences, rather than an attempt to produce a wider analysis of the factors which affect the manipulation of space in prisons. In the context of this study and the six sample prisons I selected, the

analysis would have produced a similar result to an examination of the data prison by prison.

I eventually decided to amalgamate interviews to provide an overall picture of prison life in Scotland as a means of producing as full an account as possible of the physical and psychological conflicts experienced and reproduced by prisoners and officers through space and time. I found this approach difficult to adopt, as the idea of 'generalising' my six case-study 'experiences' seemed wholly contradictory to my aim of accessing the 'other' in prison and realising the coping potentials of the 'individual' in particular establishments and under particular conditions. There was always a danger of endorsing the generalised accounts already in existence and therefore failing to meet the aims of my thesis. On the other hand, by looking at the data, I was able to build up a picture of the contested use of space in prison, and to assess the implications of this for penal policy and planning.

In order to do this, I developed wide categories in which to place my data, encompassing general issues such as 'space as safety', 'space as power', 'spatial conflict between prisoners and officers'. In doing this, I ensured that I preserved my own personal aim of not moving too far out of context and away from where, how and who the material had emanated from and the personal and environmental baggage associated with that material. I initially chose these categories to be wide and encompassing, the number of categories increasing as I acquired a more dynamic picture in my head of the data I had collected. Trends between establishments were cross-referenced wherever possible, but the context of the particular establishment where the quote came from was never lost in an attempt to maintain individuality of experience. In order to do this, I read through each interview meticulously, putting category symbols by the side of respective quotes.

I did not use the literal 'cut and paste' technique, cutting quotes from the transcripts and placing them in particular boxes, as I was aware of removing my material from the context of a particular prison establishment, the conditions in which the interview was carried out and the actual person being interviewed. This may not always be self-evident in the text, but I found it important for the analysis to remain close to my interview text, due to the

nature of the personal information collected from within such a restrictive environment, where only limited access to prisoners and staff had been granted in the past. There was also a need to be attentive to the informality of the interviews through my attempts to put the interviewees at ease (and myself). The data collected were not merely factual, but actual narrations of people's experiences and therefore some material although not directly relevant, remained important and necessary explanatory parts of the text: as a finger-print of that particular person and his/her experiences.

This categorisation process obviously took time. I often found myself reading material over and over again after realising the need for a new category. Such a problem is however not merely associated with this process. The need to realise a final position as far as recognition of categories are concerned is a very real problem for any qualitative analysis. After much perseverance and contemplation, I drew a satisfactory limit on my observations. By this time I found I was at ease with my material, having a wide knowledge of the interviews and a certain affection for each of them as to the information they provided and the manner in which it was delivered. Whilst labelling the text I had simultaneously made notes of where the information could be found under category headings, this making the task of writing up much easier. Ideas and ways of expressing them occurred in short bursts of inspiration and enthusiasm as I gradually sifted through my data. It was not merely a story-telling experience, but an exploration of my data through my own interpretation and experience in collecting the information.

### **To compute or not to compute?**

Computer-assisted analyses of qualitative data was considered. After much deliberation and consideration of the software tools available, I decided against using it for a number of personal and ethical reasons. Such an approach would have had certain advantages in producing a thorough formalised and structured approach (Dey: 1993). Data can be recorded, filed and indexed, loaded and later retrieved efficiently. However it was this relatively 'structured' approach which I was sceptical of. My initial approach to collecting my data had already been subjected to stringent restrictions and parameters as imposed by the Scottish Prison Service. Interviewees were not

chosen at random as I would have preferred, and time allocation for interviews was often tight. Taking into account the restrictions on where the interviews took place (in prison cells or governors' offices) and the need to account for prisoners' concerns about the confidentiality of the interview, the bureaucratic and formalistic parameters had already shaped my data quite enough.

In my opinion, the manner in which prisoners and officers expressed themselves, together with how certain questions were responded to and the way in which the interview flowed from beginning to end, were important determinants of the meaning of the data collected. It is because of this that I preferred to view each interview as a whole and within context: to adopt a more personal approach and to subsequently categorise and sift through the data considerate of the individuals' responses. To code, cut and paste the data so crudely I believed, would have destroyed the quality of the material, removing it from a context which proved so important in shaping its outcome. I had only been granted access to five prisoners in each prison. The relevance of the design, regime, location, security category, has important implications for the extent to which prisoners and officers feel secure and comfortable in the prison and affects the extent to which these issues of fear and safety determine the nature of social relations between the two groups. This sense of fear also has important implications for the manner in which they perceive and utilise these spaces for their own purposes and the degree to which experience of prison, previous to this particular time, determines their response to its restrictive environment. I therefore did not wish to lose context or dilute the significance of my findings from the particular establishments. I wanted to respond to my data in a relatively unstructured manner in an attempt to see the data as it is. As May (1995) states:

"Facts do not speak for themselves. Values, ethical and theoretical considerations are still part of the research process - regardless of the mathematical skills of the researcher" (p.84)

When analysing the data, I attempted not to allow one particular issue to cloud my overall analysis. I did of course have initial ideas I was interested in analysing, but from the questionnaires in Appendix I, it is evident how many

subjects were covered in an attempt to determine the relevance of the use of space within the prison system and its subculture.

The use of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was another consideration. As May (1995) implies:

“The aim of questionnaire analysis is to examine patterns among replies to questions and explore the relationships between variables by explaining them in terms of what are known as *independent variables*” (p.84).

However, as he emphasises, this relies on deciding on these particular variables and specification of the relationships in terms of which of these variables are influential. This approach did not tie in with the aims of this study or with the structure of my interviews. Once again this approach required stringent re-interpretations of data and categorisations based on a need to discover how people from different social, economic, age, gender sections of the community responded, and to draw interpretations from such cross-tabulations. My data-sample was firstly too small for such a microscopic analysis of material and furthermore, was a study of individuals who, on entering prison have been dispossessed of an identity from outside the prison walls. The need to access their views as ‘prisoners’ and ‘officers’ and ‘governors’ was paramount - to be attentive to and sensitive towards their own experiences from within the prison system as individuals.

Analysis of the data could have been carried out in relation to length of sentence, category, time employed etc., but once again the size of the sample (five prisoners, five officers and two governors in each establishment) would have proven to be statistically too insignificant. Furthermore, it is necessary to add that categorisation or length of sentence does not produce opinion. Such correlations cannot be directly inferred. It is only through experience and, surprisingly, through hearsay from other prisoners and officers within the social and physical spaces of the prison, that such opinions have been formulated.

Computation of data has the additional advantage of redefining and extending the initial categories, thereby producing what is viewed as a more in-depth analysis (Bryman: 1988; Dey: 1992; Miles & Huberman: 1984; Strauss:



1987). In my opinion, and in relation to research within the confinements of prison, such an intense breakdown of the material would serve to remove the data even further from its context. These accounts refer to how to code data and emphasise how this approach is merely an extension of that which already forms the 'core' of qualitative data. My aim was to access views of prisoners and officers from within the actual confines of the prison and to gently break down the data and compare and contrast between these prison establishments as part of a wider system - six very different establishments where other factors personal to individuals have shaped their experience. My analysis was inherently a measure of the impact of the prison 'experience' on the individual's perceptions and the extent to which individuals transform themselves and their perceptions into language through experience in order to cope. I was looking for a 'pattern' but not in the conventional sense - trying to establish a spatially determined coping strategy, but one that is relevant to individuals from different backgrounds and experiences and coping potentials.

## **Conclusions**

In sum, the aim of this thesis is an attempt to outline and detail the prison 'experience'; to gain an insight into the lives of the inmates; to access their interpretations of the strategies employed by the prison authorities and to come to terms with the tactics used by prisoners to counter these strategies as a means both physically and psychologically to survive the prison experience. The data collected are rich in such experience and interpretation. To cut and paste the material provided and remove context through amalgamation of these interpretations under implied causal and structural headings such as age, gender, length of sentence, would have destroyed the quality of the material and essentially removed the relevance of the individual's experience of prison life in different establishments. Interpreting the data, for example, under the heading of 'age' and developing reasoning for prisoners' interpretations and behaviour within this category, would have removed the relevance of the individual's interpretation of prison life within space and time. Each prisoner has individual reasons for reacting and adjusting to prison life in particular ways, at particular times and places. This behaviour is based on a temporal and spatial judgement of safety for the 'self' and



legitimation of the 'self' as an 'individual'. Each statement relates to a story; a personal history of situations, people and processes in space and time. An individual's interpretation and behaviour in particular situations is essentially an expression of the 'self' as an adjustment into a particular 'niche' (Toch: 1992). These are required to counter the strategies employed by the authorities used to control the whole prison population and essentially remove the identities of the individual prisoner.

As I have already indicated, an expression of actual quantities of findings do not provide reasons for individual's attitudes and, more relevantly, interpretations of particular situations. They merely restrict the data, not allowing it to 'breathe' and stand as it is. I wanted my analysis to be a more three-dimensional examination of prison life - to present my findings under wider core themes as a means to access a clear focus of actual experience and reaction to imprisonment in the 1990s. The numbers of respondents used in this study were also, as noted earlier, not conducive to numerical analysis. Gaining access to the prisoners and staff in the chosen establishments had proven particularly difficult. I was therefore interested in taking this opportunity to be as thorough in my data collection as was feasibly possible in relation to the time provided for me to undertake the work and the type and number of prisoners and officers I was authorised to interview. It was therefore personally important for me to ensure that my data was examined in a manner that allowed it to remain almost untouched and raw; to regard my findings in a way which would enable the reader to attempt to identify with the true dimensions of prisoners' experiences within the physical and psychological confinements of the prison.

This thesis is essentially a study of the spatial inter-linkages of the 'self' (personal identities of prisoners and officers) and the 'other' (stereotypical roles and identities adopted and attributed to officers by prisoners and prisoners by officers), within a particular restrained space and time - a conceptualisation of the 'experience of experience'. I wanted to maintain my 'thick' description (Geertz: 1973) - to not lose sight of the intention or context of the data. As de Certeau emphasises, the actual mapping on paper of the real, material data essentially removes dimension before any analysis has taken place. It is "a mark in place of acts, a relic in place of performances: it is

only their remainder, the sign of their erasure" (p.35). To compute further is, in my opinion, to remove the very essence of the material collected.

The capabilities of various agencies and individuals and their authoritative and personal responses to my research determined the final outcome of the analysis. What should be emphasised is that the power induced to control these capabilities is not only externally linked (being a production of the prison environment and culture), but is internally determined through self-denial, self-expectation and personal experience. My thesis is a description of the empirical world of the prison, the final interpretation of data being based on reflection of my own experiences and perceptions. The aim of the thesis is to produce a snapshot in time of a prison system in transition. I realised the need to recognise a quantitative approach and not merely view my data in context without comparison. What I have attempted to do is highlight the relevance of the individual and his/her experiences and perceptions in determining the quality of existence in prison, as well as realising this experience as a measure of his/her coping abilities. As Bryman and Burgess (1995, p. 219) state, retaining context is "linked to a researcher's theoretical assumptions and not just something associated with certain data-handling devices". As established earlier, my own experiences and conceptualisations have had important connotations for this study. Many of my perspectives were established early on in the study merely due to the fact that my thesis was externally funded and certain pre-conceptions, methods of studying and reporting initial theoretical findings were required by the E.S.R.C. at particular intervals, as a means to present my findings and progress at that time. In many ways these reports made me focus my approach, but they also proved difficult to produce, as the time-scale for my fieldwork did not mirror my original plans presented to the E.S.R.C.. It was therefore difficult to discuss findings which I did not have access to. However, I did have more time to develop theoretical conceptions.

It is necessary to emphasise that my own time and experience has shaped and manipulated the final outcome of this thesis. Core themes were developed through reading and interpretation, whilst particular ideas were articulated in the field. The frequency of observations was noted but in terms of who, where and how they were offered as information: not as a mere expression of

quantity, but more as a recognition of quality through attention to expression of the respondents.

In the following chapter I detail the micro and macro geographies of the six prison establishments visited in this study. I emphasise the relevance of the design, layout and use of these internal and external spaces for the operation of security and control ethics within the prisons, as well as for the development of social relations between prisoners and officers and prisoners and their peers.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Institutional Space I*

In order to appreciate the manner in which the micro-geographies (internal spaces - cells, dining-halls, recreation facilities, stairways) of the prison are manipulated as a form of power by prison officials and prisoners in both a physical sense (through action) and psychological sense (through symbolism, representation and social interaction), it is important to acknowledge the macro geographies of the prisons - their locations, the categories of prisoners contained within them, and their ages and designs. Such factors have important connotations for the use of space in prisons. The physical barriers of the prison (in relation to both its situation, accessibility and its interior layout), through constraint of liberty, loss of an individual's identity and rigid regimes, become psychological barriers to the development of prisoners' relations with both their peers and staff (and therefore social and symbolic representations to prisoners and staff). Such barriers have major implications for the adoption of stereotypical roles by both staff and prisoners. Each group asserts these stereotypical characteristics as a protective barrier for the protection of the 'self' and therefore as a means to cope and appear strong and secure amongst others (as will be examined in later chapters, a show of weakness in prison places prisoners and staff in a vulnerable position). These characteristics impose constraints upon the degree to which social relationships and spatial representations are formed between the two groups. These barriers in turn determine the extent to which prisoners and officers manipulate these prison spaces as a form of control and discipline for the authorities (the strong), but also as an arena for power and conflict for the prisoners (the weak). Through experience of the manipulation of space for reasons of control, particular symbols are conjured up by these prison establishments and particular meanings attached to them by both prisoners and staff, these fuelling stereotypical behaviour from within the prison. Rumour, media coverage and past experiences are thus important determinants of this manipulatory process occurring through space. It is therefore necessary to outline and appreciate the forms these physical barriers adopt, in order to explain their social and psychological implications later on in the text.

As explained in the Introductory chapter, six prisons were chosen as part of my research sample - Peterhead Prison, Castle Huntly Young Offenders' Institution, Perth Prison, Cornton Vale Female Institution, Shotts Prison and Shotts Unit (see Figure One, p. 97). The location, design, architecture and regimes of each of these institutions will be examined in turn, in order to provide a structural basis for further social and spatial analysis. By gaining a clearer understanding of the actual spaces (structure) in which individuals exist, live and cope (human agency), a framework will be established within which the social, symbolic spaces of the prison will be shown to develop.

Explanations of each prison will establish the categories of prisoners detained, the prison layout, design and location, and will allow the reader to gain a clearer insight into how space has been, one, institutionally produced through architecture and symbolic meanings attached to these spaces; two, socially produced through social relations in the prisons and the changes which have occurred and the disruptions and periods of calm resulting; and, three, symbolically produced through the meanings attached to these prisons emanating from the historical and social production of space and more importantly human agency and the influence of individuals' experience and perceptions. From this it will become evident how the development and production of space itself determines its successful utilisation. Furthermore, I will stress the conflicting manner in which space is used institutionally (by the authorities through regime and discipline, as will be shown in this chapter and Chapter V) and personally by the prisoners (through interaction, group recognition and personal attachment - Chapters VI and VII).

### **Peterhead Prison**

Peterhead is a small fishing port on the north east side of Scotland. The prison is situated on one side of the harbour looking out to sea. Initially constructed in the 1840s by prisoners of war, the prison continues to maintain its prominence in terms of both architecture and imagery, fuelled by its somewhat troubled history as a maximum security prison.



The prison consists of four halls, each built on the gallery design<sup>1</sup> with three floors or flats within each hall. The layout of the prison has very much been affected by constant additions to the main structure, this having important implications for the way in which space is used as a control mechanism. Works were constructed in the 1940s and are therefore located on the edges of the main body of the prison. These areas have created security and control risks for the prison authorities in that the movement of prisoners from the residential blocks to the work areas require accompaniment by officers at all times and constant surveillance. The chapel and visiting facilities are also relatively new and are housed in portacabins near the main gate.

In the case of Peterhead, it is important to take account of the prison's turbulent history in order to understand how its past has produced its present, not only spatially but also symbolically. The prison originally detained violent prisoners removed from other prisons across Scotland because of their disturbing behaviour and the impact they had on the overall prison populations in these establishments. Regimes at Peterhead at this time were very restrictive, prisoners usually being locked up for up to 23 hours in a day and not allowed to associate during dining or exercise periods. Both staff and prisoners were subjected to a particularly volatile environment which on occasions exploded. One such occasion, and which had important consequences for the future of Peterhead, was the riot of 1984 in which a few prisoners managed to gain access to the roof areas in order to protest at the conditions under which they were being held (see *The Gateway Exchange: The Roof Comes Off* - undated).

In 1989, Peterhead was re-categorised as a sex/ vulnerable prison for those prisoners unable to serve their sentence in the mainstream (see below). Thirteen lock-down cells were retained for violent prisoners under a strict regime (Rules (Scotland) 36, Chapter II), whilst the rest of the prison was allowed to operate as a normal mainstream prison. But the riots of the 1980s fuelled rumours that Peterhead was managed under a restrictive, de-humanising and debilitating regime. These images continue to exist, not only in terms of the media/public's perceptions, but also in relation to staff mentalities and officers' experiences of Peterhead's troubles prior to the re-

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<sup>1</sup> Three floors surround a central atrium, connected by stairs and gangways.

categorisation of the prison. In Chapter VII, I will explore how the spaces of the prison symbolise and conjure up images and meanings through time and individual's experiences and how these symbols influence and produce the identities and actions of those individuals exposed to them.

The prison's design capacity is 275 and at present contains 199 prisoners all of whom are unable to serve their sentences in a mainstream prison for two main reasons:

[a] They are vulnerable prisoners "who either by virtue of personality or offence are subject to victimisation or exploitation by stronger elements" (SPS: 1990c). This group includes those prisoners who have been committed for sexual crimes and those who for other personal reasons cannot cope in a mainstream prison.

[b] "Those whose influence or behaviour is considered by local prison management to be detrimental to good order and the smooth running of their prison of classification" (SPS: 1990c).

Both groups of prisoners are strictly segregated and are subjected to two very different regimes. The vulnerable prisoners are allowed to live in full association at work and during recreation and are allowed access to educational facilities. As the Scottish Prison Service report declares:

"The vulnerable prisoners are managed in the normal way,...and in some cases for the first time since sentencing enjoy a stress-free atmosphere" (SPS: 1990c)

Here it is important to emphasise how the authorities have used space as both a method of control and relief from the mainstream. Vulnerable prisoners, particularly those who have been committed for sexual crimes, are given the opportunity to serve their sentence at Peterhead in order to ensure their own safety. These prisoners are often deemed to be the 'lowest of the low' by their fellow inmates and are subsequently exposed to violence. It is here that the prisoners' social hierarchy of crimes within the prison culture openly manages to manipulate the use of space in relation to the removal of these prisoners from the mainstream.

Such a utilisation of space must be viewed as effective not only from the individual prisoner's position, but also from that of the system as a whole. Removal from the mainstream to any specially designated unit assures the prisoner's own safety whilst simultaneously relieving the original prison from what could be viewed as a troublesome element. The SPS implies that such a method of segregating spatially provides these prisoners with an opportunity to serve their sentence in a "stress-free atmosphere" (SPS: 1990c). As will be explored later on, with the aid of qualitative material, this is not so. The prisoner social hierarchy operates through space regardless of segregation, location or regime. Prisoners continue to identify themselves as "prisoners" in the stereotypical sense of the word and to impose these stereotypes upon other prisoners and officers. Violence against these prisoners (sometimes referred to as 'Beasts') continues to exist at Peterhead, resulting in the need for further segregation and protection during the entire day. These constraints are impacted by the location of Peterhead and its inaccessibility (particularly during the winter months) and the relocation of prisoners from their "community" prisons. Sexual offenders are therefore not only segregated from within the prison, but also from without, and their own families and friends - the spatial barriers exist not only as physical constraints, but also psychological and social constraints, endorsing the prisoner's own self-identity as an "outcast of social outcasts" and creating a prison within a prison.

The violent prisoners (of any crime and previous category who are perceived to be too violent for and a safety threat to mainstream prisons) are detained under Prison (Scotland) Rule 36. They are not allowed to associate with others and are closely supervised at all times, detained in their cells for 23 hours. Once an individual's behaviour has been deemed by the prison governor as improved, he is allowed to progress to a more relaxed regime and then on to a prison outwith Peterhead. Once again, space is used by the SPS as a relief mechanism for the entire system, confining the troublesome elements to one corner of the country.

Such a segregatory mechanism is inherently 'crisis' oriented. Prisoners are segregated and banished not only from society, but also the prison system as a whole, as a way of maintaining order and control, usually at the expense of

a normalised environment aimed at “preserving prisoners’ self respect, enabling them to retain links with family and community, and preparing and assisting prisoners to cope with life on discharge” (SPS: 1990a). The utilisation of space therefore exists as a response to a control ethic for the system and as a privilege for the prisoner. The spaces of the prison may therefore be viewed as an arena of confrontation, with both parties (staff and prisoners) attempting to gain access and control over common ground but for two different and opposing reasons, with prisoners viewing space as a form of privilege and staff perceiving it as a tool for the imposition of control. What must be emphasised is the fact that both groups’ perceptions denote a striving for increased control and more importantly legitimisation of their own role and their social statuses within the prison. ‘Sentence Planning’ has attempted to alleviate this through better communication and the provision of an arena where these differences in attitudes between staff and prisoners can be confronted. However, as will be explained later on in the thesis, this has merely resulted in worsening the problem.

### **Castle Huntly Young Offenders’ Institution (YOI)**

Castle Huntly YOI is Scotland’s only open Young Offenders’ Institution, accommodating young men from the ages of 16 to 21 who are serving sentences of less than 4 years and who are deemed by their behaviour as able to cope under a relaxed regime. Located in the grounds of a castle, originally built in 1452, the main structure was used as a borstal until the late 1960s when it was proposed that an open YOI be built adjacent to it. The Institute is surrounded by farmland and only accessible by road, the closest town being Dundee.

Designed in the form of a hospital, the Institute is capable of holding 144 Young Offenders, although at the time of study 103 were accommodated, with four absconding over the three days in which the research was being carried out. The layout of the building comprises long corridors leading off to accommodation wings and recreation and dining areas. Between each block, small conservatories have been constructed, surrounded by windows (for aesthetic purposes), although these areas have recently been converted into recreation areas such as snooker rooms. The accommodation wings leading

off from the corridors are 'L' shaped in design, this creating serious problems for observation and therefore security and control. This has been partially overcome by placing convex mirrors in the corners of the wings to allow officers to see around the corners.

Each wing accommodates 10 offenders in separate cells. Each offender has a key to his cell and access to night sanitation. (All offenders at Castle Huntly have access to sanitation at all hours of the day). At night the wing doors are locked but offenders are still able to wander freely between cells and washing facilities. There are only two such wings in the Institute - the rest of the offenders are accommodated in dormitories of six men each, with their own private toilet and sink. These offenders also have their own keys to their dorms, although an over-riding lock prevents them from leaving their rooms at night. Here, the possession of a key is linked to the promotion of self-discipline and hence the spaces in which prisoners essentially live are encouraged by the authorities to be viewed as more personal spaces over which prisoners have a form of control, through their ability to lock and unlock their doors.

The prison itself is surrounded by farmland and gardens and is not enclosed by an exterior security wall. Each offender is given the opportunity to wander freely throughout the grounds without escort, with the added responsibility of turning up for work, recreation and meal times when necessary. As is evident, security and control at Castle Huntly depend not so much upon surveillance, but on trust and the responsibility of the individual offender. Access to and control over space is once again used as a privilege at Castle Huntly, in which offenders are encouraged to develop their own sense of responsibility as 'young men'. Due to its relaxed regime, it is not so much a confrontational 'space' between staff and young offenders, but one which attempts to "promote self-discipline" through education and vocational training (SPS : 1990c).

Dining facilities at Castle Huntly were, at the time the research was being carried out, temporarily located in two rooms originally used as dormitories. The lack of offenders in this age group as well as the loss of Crown Immunity within the Prison Service as a whole, has provided the authorities with an



opportunity to re-utilise space at Castle Huntly. The kitchen and dining facilities have had to be demolished due to low design standards and this has resulted in the re-location of the kitchens to a de-mountable and dining facilities to original dorms, whilst facilities are being re-built. This has had obvious implications for control - these dining rooms are particularly cramped due to the fact that they were not designed for such purposes. During the evenings they are used as T.V rooms. In this case, these spaces may be viewed as being used by the authorities as a coping strategy during the redesign of the prison layout. Control and security have had to become secondary factors, due to the lack of space available to carry out the everyday tasks within the prison.

Visiting facilities at Castle Huntly are located within the actual castle. Each offender is allowed weekly visits from 1.30pm to 4pm, with a maximum of three visitors at one visit. Unlike the mainstream prisons, visits are unintrusive affairs - there are no security cameras and officers tend to remain out of sight in a small control office at the side of the visiting area.

Once offenders have served a certain length of their sentence, they are allowed out on escorted leave for four hours in Dundee with a responsible member of the family/ friend. Home leaves are also provided for a maximum of six days at Christmas and six days during the summer. Offenders are trusted to return to the Institution and only a handful usually fail to do so. This, it is explained by the staff, is due to the influence and pressure from their families, which is openly encouraged. Absconders are often returned to Castle Huntly by their parents, themselves knowledgeable of the fact that their sons will face longer sentences under stricter regimes if and when recaptured. Thus, responsibility for serving a sentence at Castle Huntly is extended to the family outside of the Institution. Security is therefore not only dependent upon the imposition of trust and responsibility by the authorities internally, but also by the offenders' families on the outside - the spaces of and meanings attached to the prison are thus extended to the spaces of the family and personal consciences of family individuals.

However, Castle Huntly does experience particular problems in relation to its unique security and control ethic. The open regime and lack of external

security provides offenders with the opportunity to abscond, and this has proved to be a major problem. Castle Huntly is advertised to young offenders as being the top YOI in Scotland. Offenders are given the choice to progress there on account of their behaviour. The conditions under which offenders are detained are considerably unimposing and offenders are strongly advised that if they wish to abscond, on being recaptured they will not be allowed to serve the remains of their sentence at Castle Huntly, but in Glenochil or Polmont YOIs, where regimes and security are considerably stricter.

Despite space being used as a medium for trust and responsibility of the individual prisoner at Castle Huntly, the spaces of the prison are not actively physically imposing upon the behaviour of offenders, but psychologically restrictive. They exist as a form of temptation for offenders, the open spaces surrounding the prison being contrary to the symbolic meaning of what a prison actually represents, what it attempts to do by way of security and control and how it uses space to this end. Thus a high absconding rate is not surprising. But the problem is much deeper than this. Chapter VII explores how the relations between offenders within the 'confines' of the Institute have damaging effects on individuals' self esteem. Close proximity to other offenders, through this relaxed use of space encourages bullying and taunting based around individuals' self-identities and expressions as either 'hard men' or 'victims' (their ability to cope), and in relation to the areas they originate from, generally Lanarkshire and Glasgow.

It is thus evident how identity in prison, whether it is in relation to the spaces within the prison and the associated stereotypes, or the spaces outside of the prison, form an important part in the success of Castle Huntly's control ethic. Offenders are made to feel responsible for the way in which they serve their sentences and in doing this, are furthermore given the opportunity to manipulate the spaces of the prison to their own ends. Prison space in Castle Huntly is thus used as a medium of control between staff and offenders and offenders and offenders.

In being allowed to move around the prison, and trusted with access to their own spaces (their cells), prisoners in Castle Huntly YOI are provided with more freedom and a sense of control over the spaces they live in. In being

provided with such freedom, they are encouraged to identify with particular spaces in which they feel secure and therefore have control over. Provision of this control ethic for prisoners is used as a medium of control and discipline by the authorities (in relation to the perception of this freedom as a 'privilege' and the removal of this privilege as a punishment) and for the prisoners amongst themselves, where identification with particular places for individuals and association in these spaces, provides the fuel for the development of particular groups and gangs, based on the places from which the prisoners originate outside. The freedom allowed to the prisoners and the open regime operated, encourages them to develop themselves and their own personal identities through the acquisition of education and particular vocational skills. In being provided with this opportunity, the offenders are encouraged to be themselves.

This process of identification with the 'self' and the manipulation of spaces by prisoners as a means of asserting self identity, obviously does not take place in closed prisons to the same extent, due to the lack of freedom and trust accorded to prisoners. Mainstream prisoners are prevented from identifying with their true selves due to the prison authorities' perception of the need for the imposition of security, order and control in these prisons. This is implemented by the continual attempt at maintaining a knowledge of prisoners as 'deviants', and not as individuals. Such manipulation of space by prisoners in these prisons therefore takes place on a more restricted level, the actual need for prisoners to develop a personal 'niche' (Toch: 1992) in which to operate and feel secure, being more relevant to those prisoners confined within secure regimes.

### **Perth Prison**

The oldest of all the prisons in Scotland, Perth holds local prisoners serving up to 18 months and long-term prisoners serving over 18 months. It is a category 'B' adult male closed establishment but contains prisoners in all security categories 'A' to 'C', and 'D' category prisoners in the Training for Freedom Hostel.

The prison lies on the main road into Perth. Access is therefore relatively easy with buses passing the front of the prison every hour, its central location and accessibility being in stark contrast to some of the other prisons in Scotland, such as Peterhead, Inverness and Shotts prisons. The original buildings were erected for and by the French prisoners from the Napoleonic Wars. Part of these buildings still stand today, the present prison dating from 1842.

Perth Prison is sturdy in build and bounded by one high security fence and one wall. Helicopter wires criss-cross large open areas in an attempt to prevent prisoners from escaping by air. The prison consists of four residential halls plus a six cell unit, a hospital wing and a Training for Freedom Hostel. This Hostel is located outside of the prison boundary for, amongst other reasons (such as the need to spatially separate particular halls and offenders), to accentuate spatially the progression of the individual through his sentence. The prison is built in a radial design, each hall emanating out from the centre, this itself connected by a continual corridor. Three of the four halls (A,C,D) are designed in the form of galleries, with three floors. Each floor possesses its own shared sanitation facilities. The entire prison population at Perth has to slop out at the present time (except for eight cells in 'D' Hall which have inter-locking wash-rooms - eight cells were however used up for this purpose, this having important implications for the availability of space for offenders). 'E' Hall is designed in the form of a mental institute and is somewhat separate from the main body of the prison. It was originally the Criminal Lunatic Department and as such was built for that purpose with wide corridors, doors that open outwards in order to prevent inmates from barricading themselves in and alarm lighting above cell doors to alert staff of trouble. Due to the layout of the building and the inherent problems for staff of observing prisoners, this has had to be designated the 'top' hall in Perth.

It is apparent from the above the extent to which the utilisation of space in Perth prison has been strongly determined by past ideas on the treatment of offenders. The use of space in prisons is thus both historically and socially constructed, this having important implications for the future use of the prison structure. The prison is itself classed as a listed building, this preventing any major structural alterations from taking place. Additions to the main structure of the building are allowed, although the position of these

additional buildings can have important connotations for elements of security and control. An example is the Works Department which was added onto the original structure, its location in relation to the main body of the prison being recognised as a potential security risk in terms of the distance and wide open spaces prisoners must be escorted across in order to get to and from work.

Recreation facilities take the form of a gym built-on adjacent to 'E' hall and therefore once again pose difficulties of access for other hall prisoners. Snooker, darts, T.V and video facilities are also available in each hall. Each hall is therefore relatively self-sufficient. In consideration of this fact, the gallery design of the halls allows continual observation of prisoners (but also it must be noted continual observation of staff by prisoners). This, alongside the manner in which halls can be immediately shut down at any hint of trouble, establishes how Perth prison may be viewed as possessing the best design and ultimate utilisation of space for the issues of security and control. As far as the conditions and facilities are concerned however, Perth prison requires more resources in order to bring it up to the standards expected of such institutions.

Dining facilities take the form of plated meals brought across from the kitchens (originally 'B' Hall) in hot trays. Several complaints were made relating to the quality of food and the fact that it is never hot. Prisoners dine in their own cells either alone or with another prisoner. As far as could be gathered, this situation did not create problems. Prisoners generally stated they did not wish to dine in association due to the fact that they had experienced it before and did not like the tensions associated with the gathering together of large groups of prisoners at a time and place where dissatisfaction with conditions could result in disruption. It became apparent from this fact that the utilisation of space by prisoners and the authorities was an important issue determining the degree to which they feel secure or at risk whilst serving their sentences. In this case, the use of space in prison may therefore not only be regarded as an important security determinant for staff in prisons, but also for the prisoners themselves and the manner in which they serve their sentences. Here, association verses separation, where security is not effective in one space with 200 prisoners, but is obviously effective when prisoners are separated in cells.



The regime in Perth is relatively strict. Prisoners have to be escorted everywhere by staff and those prisoners on protection are allocated one officer each to themselves in order to prevent them from being attacked by other offenders and causing a wider disruption. This issue is discussed in detail in Chapter VII in relation to the manner in which the form the prison social hierarchy of crime in prison has adopted, has had important implications for the personal living, recreational and working spaces of individual prisoners. Such a cultural manipulation by prisoners has produced a further group of the 'other' within the prison walls, these individuals alienated and restricted both spatially and socially by staff and prisoners.

A progression system operates in Perth, relating to the length of sentence to be served and the behaviour of the individual prisoner. Prisoners can progress from 'D' Hall to 'A' Hall to 'E' Hall <sup>2</sup>:

- 'D' Hall is the admission hall for all long term prisoners serving sentences of over 18 months and is also the location for the Sentence Planning and Induction Unit. It is of a gallery design with slopping-out facilities. Prisoners who have been sentenced to over 18 months and less than 10 years must serve a minimum of 3 months in 'D' Hall before they qualify for progression to 'A' Hall. Those sentenced to determinate sentences of over 10 years or life sentence prisoners must serve a minimum of 1 year in the hall before they can progress to 'A' Hall. In all cases they must be free from discipline reports for a period of 3 months.
- The next step is 'A' hall and, as is the case with 'D' hall prisoners serving between 18 months to 10 years, prisoners must serve at least 3 discipline report free months in here before they can progress to the next hall in the progression system. Those serving over 10 years to life must serve a minimum of 2 years in this hall. As a contrast to 'D' hall, prisoners have control of their own cell light from within their cell, with an override

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<sup>2</sup> These labels are associated with the previous use of space. After consideration of the types of prisoners detained in these halls, it was felt they were not secure enough and thus the progressive system was shifted to accommodate for the perceived security requirements of prisoners and prison officers. It is therefore evident how the perception of what is required by the physical spaces of the prison determines the meanings attached to them by staff and prisoners.

switch for staff on the outside. A Personal Officer Scheme operates in this hall as part of the Sentence Planning Strategy.

- 'E' Hall is the last hall in the progression system within Perth. The atmosphere in this prison is reasonably relaxed, with prisoners approaching the end of their sentences and therefore expected to act responsibly. All prisoners in this hall must either be employed in a workparty or be in full-time education. No-one who is on closed visits may reside in this hall.
- From 'E' Hall prisoners can progress to Forth or Pentland Halls in Edinburgh Prison or to the semi-open and open prisons of Dungavel, Penninghame and Noranside.
- The six cell unit which is attached but run entirely separate from 'E' Hall is a national facility. It is used to help prisoners re-adjust following periods outwith the mainstream (i.e. on Rule (Scotland) 36 at Peterhead Prison), with the intention of them once again being able to cope with and return to the mainstream. This is achieved by a high degree of prisoner and staff interaction with considerable input from the Prison Psychologist.
- The punishment block in 'C' Hall consists of 6 cells situated on a lower level to the hall itself, in a semi-cellar area. Referred to as the "Digger", it is used for those prisoners creating problems in the halls. There is no furniture in these cells except for a mattress on a raised concrete slab. Prisoners are made to wear canvass clothing on entering these cells. These cells can only be used for fourteen days at a time, after which the Governor must re-assess the case for moving the individual back to the mainstream.

It is apparent from the above that the utilisation of space in prison is determined by the categorisation of prisoners and therefore the system's perception of how much a security risk an individual poses to the authorities and wider society. In view of the restrictive manner in which individuals are assessed and labelled, and the rigid spatial restrictions the prison system faces, it is obvious how elements of security and control have become too

restrictive for the majority of prisoners. In many cases, Category 'B' and 'C' prisoners are being detained under Category 'A' conditions, this having particular implications for the manner in which prisoners serve their sentences i.e. the degree of freedom they are allowed as well as the general atmosphere in the prison and the relationships between staff and prisoners.

The progression system in Perth itself reveals how space in prison is hypothetically used as a privilege in the context of a 'carrot and stick' approach. Prisoners are encouraged to behave themselves for periods of three months at a time in order to be granted permission to progress to a new hall, a more relaxed regime, better conditions and more facilities. In practice however, this does not always happen. Progression depends upon the availability of space in the halls, this itself being dependent on the speed in which prisoners are passing through the entire Scottish Prison System. The utilisation of space in prisons must therefore be placed in a national context.

What must also be emphasised concerns the quality of facilities available to prisoners within the halls - in Perth at present, 'D' Hall offers the best quality facilities, whilst 'E' Hall, the top hall in the progression system is in serious need of repair. Prisoners are aware of this fact, but are not necessarily that bothered by it. In this context it is evident how the use of space in Perth prison symbolises amongst other things, a form of 'coping' mechanism for prisoners, helping them cope psychologically with their sentence and making them feel they are on the way out of the system. It is not necessarily the quality of facilities provided as 'privilege' which encourages prisoners to strive towards completing their sentences, but the actual process of moving from hall to hall within a particular time-frame (i.e. by serving a proportion of their sentence, and moving forward on to what may almost be termed the next 'phase' of their sentence). As will become clear in later chapters, movement within the prison towards the spaces outside is viewed by prisoners in relation to time served. It is more of a personal issue to prisoners - it is not always about the quality of the environment in which sentences are served in comparison with fellow prisoners, but is rather perceived as a personal achievement, moving towards freedom and an opportunity to assert their true identities of the 'self' away from the clutches of the prison authorities.

The visiting conditions at Perth prison consist of one large room full of tables and chairs in long rows. Crèche facilities are available as well as a canteen for prisoners' families to buy refreshments. Security in this area is very tight. Cameras constantly observe prisoners with the aid of three officers in the room. Prisoners are strip-searched after every visit in order to find any illicit substances (drugs) passed over during the visit. Such security measures are obviously necessary but may also be perceived as slightly futile, in that any prisoner attempting to smuggle drugs in to the prison, does so orally. It is evident here the lengths to which prisoners will go in using the spaces of their bodies to manipulate the system, the regime and physical spatial restrictions of the prison, to their own advantage.

As in all establishments, one room in the visiting block is devoted to closed visits for those prisoners punished for smuggling drugs or behavioural problems. Here visiting takes place behind glass screens in small cubicles where prisoners have no physical access to their visitors. Once again security cameras are in operation and staff have a further security option of listening in to conversations between prisoners and their visitors if they feel it is necessary. This is a clear example of how a restriction of space can be used to punish both prisoners and their families and highlights the manner in which the authorities can choose to utilise space as a strict control mechanism.

### **Cornton Vale Female Institution**

Situated between Stirling and the Bridge of Allen, Cornton Vale is the only female establishment in Scotland. It therefore caters for all categories of prisoners and young offenders (from remand through minimum sentences to life imprisonment) across the entire country. Built in the mid 1970s, its design is very much similar to that of a University Campus with blocks of two storey buildings separated by paved and grassy areas. Each block is represented by name in relation to the category of prisoner detained. Romeo is for remand prisoners; Yankee houses Young Offenders; Sierra is the secure block for those prisoners requiring medical observation; Bravo is for convicted short and long term prisoners at the beginning of the sentence and Papa is the privileged block for those who are serving over 18 months or are nearing the end of their sentence.

Due to the fact that Cornton Vale serves the entire of Scotland and therefore all categories of female prisoners, the utilisation of space has been very much determined by these categorisations as well as the length of sentence to be served and the ages of the offenders. All of these factors have produced an environment where progression through the system (and by this I mean Cornton Vale) from Romeo, Sierra or Yankee to Bravo and then Papa, is very much spatially restricted by, and dependent upon, the categorisation of prisoners (and therefore power that is outwith the individual's reach) rather than their behaviour. Prisoners in male institutions are provided with the means to progress not only from hall to hall by displaying a sense of responsibility and trust, but also from institution to institution when and if their categorisations are decreased. Female offenders do not have this option at Cornton Vale. They are spatially restricted by the fact that there is only one female institution available to detain them due to a lack of locational resources as well as the low numbers of female offenders who are themselves serving minimal sentences (Cornton Vale currently holds 150 convicted prisoners, the majority of whom are serving 3 years or less). Thus women in Cornton Vale are spatially restricted, not only by their relatively small numbers and the rule which separates men and women in prison, but also by their gender, with the minimum of opportunities available to them to progress to a better or different environment through their own behaviour and approach to their sentence.

It must be emphasised that women are physically restricted not only by the low numbers of their gender being convicted for crimes, but also by the inability of the system to recognise their 'spatial' progressive requirements and the relative importance attached by prisoners on this progression through the system to different environments and locations. As explained earlier, such progression exists as a physical representation of time for all prisoners, although women in the system only have available to them a form of progression on a very small scale within the confines of Cornton Vale. Thus very slight changes in the conditions available to the women within the different halls are portrayed as privileges. Once a female offender has attained these privileges and therefore progressed to Papa block, there is nowhere else to progress to, offenders often remaining in this block until release. As will become evident in Chapter VII, this has important



implications for the ways in which individual offenders approach and deal with their sentences. Carlen (1983) details progression through Cornton Vale, and focuses particularly on the regime in Papa block and how women feel imprisoned “within and without” sociability in this most privileged block in the prison. Prisoners are allowed very little freedom or association in this block, and receive an even stricter form of surveillance than their counterparts in the male establishments.

Each block is made up of several units of seven cells, each unit containing a kitchen, washing facilities and a sitting room. The layout of the unit is very much reminiscent of a traditional ‘domestic’ environment and therefore exists as a type of ‘female space’, where emphasis is placed upon a domestic/group spirit. A rota system operates in the morning before work, with each prisoner being allocated a task to maintain a tidy and clean unit environment. This includes mopping the floors, washing the dishes, tidying the kitchen and keeping the washing facilities hygienic. All meals are prepared in the cookhouse and sent up in boxes to the units where the prisoners have the opportunity to reheat them which is often necessary. (In Papa block, the women are allowed to cook their own vegetables and one member of a unit chooses to do this for the others).

Visits take place in a large room around small tables. Each convicted prisoner is allowed up to three visitors at a time every two weeks, (on the weekend) for 2 hours. Security cameras are used for the detection of drugs and the like, although strip searches are only carried out on those women who are suspected of receiving goods (drugs, money) by security cameras and prison officers supervising visits. Mothers with children are provided with bonding visits in the chapel, these being counted as a normal visit and accompanied by one officer for up to 3 hours. Provision is usually made for the parent to feed the child as well, in order to encourage a greater ‘closeness’. It is apparent at Cornton Vale that women with children are only given slight advantages in relation to maintaining contact with their children. Bonding visits are provided not so much as a privilege but a requirement by the prison to enhance mother - child relationships, with the women concerned losing rights to a normal visit. Long-termers in Papa block may receive privileged visits in the chapel as well, this building existing as a form of privileged space where

prisoners are trusted in an environment that provides a more relaxed atmosphere which is not so security conscious.

As in all male establishments, physical contact with family members is kept to a minimum in an attempt once again to prevent the passing of illicit goods. Women prisoners are not allowed to kiss their partners and officers ensure that children do not act as carriers for items such as drugs or money. Babies brought in for visits have to be checked by staff for this reason, particularly the nappy area where drugs are often stashed. The personal spaces of the body exist as important security risks in all prisons this is often more so in female institutions where the security and control element can only encroach upon women's bodies up to a certain point before imposition may be deemed as assault or abuse.

All prisoners have access to night sanitation (Nightsan). This is where electronic timers operated by prisoners allow the cell door to be opened for up to 7 minutes before an alarm is automatically triggered and the door automatically closed. Offenders in Papa have access to keys to their own cells or 'rooms' as they are referred to, and at night are allowed to 'turn-in' when they so choose, the grill gate at the end of the unit preventing them from wandering from it. Such a system is obviously very much dependent upon trust and responsibility of the prisoners as is the operation of the entire regime at Cornton Vale. Category 'C' and 'D' offenders are allowed to walk around the institution unescorted (except when visiting the administration block) and are trusted to arrive at work or at the unit on time. Such 'trust' operating within the confines of an all-category institution is not only reliant upon the authorities' confidence in the security system. It is also based on the history of Cornton Vale in terms of a low potential for disruption or escape and is in essence a product of gender identity, where women are perceived as less violent and disruptive not only through experience but the stereotypical image of women as 'gentle' individuals. This form of gender identity is reproduced around the prison in relation to the physical and psychological spaces available to the women and the facilities provided. As already emphasised, prison units have been reproduced in the form of the domestic arena where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for particular areas and carry out allocated tasks and where each unit is designed to

reproduce a form of 'family' unit with each individual dependent upon the other for its smooth running. Each unit is watched over by a member of staff who ensures that the required tasks are completed.

A small percentage of the staff at Cornton Vale are male. This has obvious implications for their job as Discipline Officers and the spaces in which they can and cannot go at particular times. It also has implications for those women who have been abused in the past and have particular psychological difficulties in dealing with men. This will be discussed further in Chapter VII, when it will be emphasised the extent to which Cornton Vale exists as a form of retreat for some women, away from the influence of family, partners and drugs.

Discipline at Cornton Vale tends to take the form of manipulating the women into a particular form and encouraging them to perceive their abilities and roles within the confines of the domestic scene, rather than merely ensuring that they carry out their sentence in a manner that does not disrupt or prevent the smooth operation of the system (Carlen: 1983; Dobash & Dobash: 1986). Women's physical and manipulative power is accepted as ineffective and is therefore not challenged. It is the identification of them as 'offenders' and individuals who have broken free from the stereotypical image of the 'woman' that the regime and spaces in which it operates attempt to challenge and change. As the Mission Statement of Cornton Vale (1993) states:

"The mission of Cornton Vale is to offer a range of opportunities and services conducive with the principles of self-respect, personal development and achievement within a safe, caring and dynamic environment."

But such self-respect, personal development and achievement is debilitating in form, restricting the female offenders at Cornton Vale both physically and psychologically. This is particularly evident in relation to the opportunities available for work and education which are viewed as being conducive to these principles. There is only one vocational course provided in hairdressing, whilst other work includes sewing uniforms and aprons in the workshops and generally cleaning and maintaining the prison. Knitting is available for remand prisoners (who are by law obliged not to work) and cookery lessons

can be taken for those willing to learn. Educational courses are also provided, although the women are only allowed to be taught for one day a week, whereas in the male establishments, full-time courses can be attended.

As is evident, the work made available is very much determined by the stereotypical 'woman' within the domestic scene. Even the vocational training is very much gender oriented, hairdressing being the only course available that provides the women with a recognised certificate, Scotvec. Relatively little attempt has been made to introduce courses which are relevant to the requirements of the female workforce outside of the prison (particularly in terms of word-processing and administration), and even less notice has been given to the idea of equal opportunities and employment training in engineering or mechanics, as are available in the male establishments. Through the design of the units, the regime in operation and the work available, Cornton Vale is reproducing the stereotypical female 'homemaker' and in turn restricting rather than enhancing the women's self-respect, personal development, potential achievement and most importantly, the opportunities available to them on release.

### **Shotts Prison**

Built on the design of New Generation Prisons (see Chapter II), Shotts Prison in Lanarkshire, is one of the newest prisons in Scotland. It consists of four blocks, each able to hold up to 117 prisoners and each prisoner having access to his own washbasin and toilet within his own cell. The prison is designed to contain long-term adult male prisoners who:

"require to be held in secure conditions including some who require maximum security, in an environment which provides security, safety for both staff and prisoners, recognises the rights of staff and prisoners, encourages prisoners to serve their sentences in as positive an atmosphere as possible and enables them to prepare for release" (SPS: 1990c).

As will become evident in Chapter V, such a role has been severely hampered by the design of the prison, in that its layout and the meanings attached to its layout and particular areas of the prison, have had important

implications for the development of a 'positive environment' and encouragement of good staff/ prisoner relations.

Each block is separated into units of twelve prisoners on two floors, with each unit separated by a central corridor and stairway as well as a grill gate which itself acts as a type of control mechanism for officers. Officers observe prisoners from an office in this central area on both floors. Observation for security purposes is obviously restricted by this design, in that no officers are in a position to see all prisoners at one time and are therefore unaware of what is happening on other floors. Security therefore relies upon aural communication, either by shouting to officers on different levels or through the use of two-way radios. Such a design has obvious control benefits in relation to retaining small groups of prisoners in one area, with the option of closing the grill gate in times of perceived risk. But this form of architecture has also had an adverse effect upon relationships between staff and prisoners, in that it has highlighted, and in some cases perpetrated the 'them and us' situation. Residential spaces of the prison are perceived as belonging to the prisoners, the corridor design of the unit with one exit only, representing 'no go areas' for staff in times of trouble.

The units are themselves almost self-contained with their own association rooms and T.Vs as well as constant access to sanitary facilities. Dining takes place within these smaller association rooms - large communal dining rooms for each block were initially provided. However, due to the congregation of large numbers of prisoners and the associated risk of disruption, this facility was removed.

The residential block is separated from the main administration building by long, wide, low ceiling corridors, designed for security purposes, the prevention of access to the roof for prisoners and maximum observation from a distance for staff. Since its opening, several changes have had to be made to the architectural features of the establishment, including the covering over of the main corridor leading down to the accommodation blocks. The corridor is covered entirely by perspex in a convex shape. Due to the layout of the actual blocks, the 'openness' of this corridor in the past provided obvious opportunities for prisoners to observe the connecting corridor and view who



was approaching. Its design therefore proved to be particularly advantageous for prisoners in allowing them to determine when and how disruptions could be staged with the ultimate precision. Recognition of this design fault by the authorities resulted in the corridor being re-covered to maintain control. Such an example proves that the spaces of the prison can exist as a medium for power struggles between staff and prisoners, with each group manipulating these spaces as a means of enhancing control over the whole prison itself.

Visiting at Shotts takes place in a large room around tables provided to seat up to three visitors. Visits are particularly intrusive affairs due to the category of prisoner detained at Shotts and the widespread problem of drugs trafficking throughout the prison. Security cameras are in evidence and, on leaving the visiting area, all prisoners are strip-searched for any illicit substances. As will become evident, the visiting facilities in prisons tend to exist as spaces of tension for prisoners, families and staff, rather than areas of relaxation where prisoners can escape the prison subculture and reassert their identities as part of a family unit outside of the system. As Goffman (1968) states in "Asylums":

"They (total institutions) create and sustain a particular kind of tension between the home world and the institutional world and use this persistent tension as strategic leverage in the management of men" (p.24).

The manipulatory power ethic of this prison subculture determines the need for such stringent measures as a means to maintain control over it and spatially restrict not only the effectiveness of substances smuggled into prisons (these existing as metaphorical examples of manipulation of the system by prisoners and a form of power against the system for prisoners), but also the behaviour and attitudes of prisoners. Such 'tension' is apparent throughout all prisons in Scotland, produced by the interaction of a number of factors (personal, staff/prisoner relationships, the weather outside) and simultaneously acting as a form of control (thereby reasserting the identity and authority of the staff, this impacting upon the behaviour and attitudes of prisoners and the interaction between these two groups). Thus the need for constant legitimization of role and identity by individual prisoners and officers as a representation of autonomy determines the reproduction of tension in the

prison, which in itself exists as a catalyst for the constant endorsement of this identity.

In being the newest prison in Scotland and one that provides some of the best facilities for prisoners in relation to sanitation, education and vocational training, Shotts has been placed under much critical scrutiny due to the high number of riotous incidents occurring almost once a year. Such outbreaks of violence have been the cause of grave concern in consideration of the facilities available to prisoners at Shotts, particularly in terms of the importance attached by prisoners to the physical environment in which they are detained and the relevance this has for their behaviour. In both prison surveys, carried out in 1992 and 1994, it was established that such physical conditions are of limited significance without associated changes to the regimes prisoners are exposed to and provisions made for improved relationships with families and local communities (Wozniak et al: 1992; 1994). In Chapter V it will be emphasised the relative importance of prisoners' personal meanings attached to the public and private spaces outside of the prison, rather than their identification with the spaces within the prison (these spaces existing as a physical and psychological control mechanism for the authorities).

### **Shotts Unit**

Located within the confines of Shotts Prison, the unit is a modern, purpose-built and well equipped maximum security facility which provides an option within the SPS away from the mainstream for adult, male, long-term prisoners who have identified themselves as having difficulties (these in turn causing them to present management challenges to the prison authorities). In essence, the unit exists as a spatial retreat for Category 'A' prisoners, the majority of whom have been detained under Prison (Scotland) Rule 36 or 'lock-down' in the larger mainstream prisons. These mainstream prisons forward names of volunteer prisoners to the Unit governor, and as vacancies arise, candidates are assessed by the Unit Psychologist, a governor grade and a member of staff. It is therefore already apparent the extent to which Shotts Unit operates as a 'voluntary space' and not an imposing and restrictive one. Prisoners elect to serve their sentences here and in doing so, have to be personally prepared to reassess their perceptions of the prison system and

their own actions in order to remain within the Unit's "supportive environment" (SPS Report 1990c) ,aided by both the utilisation of space within the Unit and the operation of a more consultative regime.

The Unit is designed to provide accommodation for up to twelve category 'A' and 'B' prisoners although since opening, the average number of prisoners held have been eight. Its layout is very much open-plan, with cells located around the edges of the main concourse in a 'Panopticon' design. Observation exists as an essential form of control, with most areas being visible to both staff and prisoners.

In terms of the facilities provided, the unit is very much progressive in opportunities available and as such operates as a normalised environment. Each cell is provided with integral sanitation and all prisoners in the Unit are allowed to design and make their own furniture and have their own T.Vs, radios and videos in their cells. The use of space in the Unit operates not only as a form of security and control. Emphasis is also placed on the idea of mutual trust and respect, these emanating from the open attitudes of staff and the open spaces both staff and prisoners inhabit. The spaces of the Unit are encouraged to be personalised in attempt to provide a basis for this trust. As the Stage 'D' Report, May 1987 on the building of the Unit, instructs:

*"The cells should open on to a recreation and dining area which will be the main circulation space of the unit. The area will in effect, act as the principle community space where joint inmate/ staff activities occur. Portable screens to be available for use within this area, designed to create the facility to enclose spaces for table tennis, pool etc. but not to be constructed as visual barriers. The space should be as light as possible in both detail and colour with simple roof lights following the roofline to provide natural light to the heart of the central space. A room large enough for community meetings should be provided with direct access from main recreation and dining areas"*(p.3) (My italics).

The scope for freedom for the prisoners is provided by the interaction of these two uses of space - physical and psychological. It must be emphasised however, the fact that such psychological manipulation could only be imposed within the confines of a secure environment in which the utmost trust in the structural security may be placed. Shotts Unit is thus situated within the ultra-secure centre of a high security prison - Shotts Prison. All

areas within the external wall of the Unit are developed in relation to security measures necessary for Category 'A' prisoners and in being so, provide the opportunity for prisoners to wander around the Unit and its garden and 5-a-side football pitch unaccompanied. As such, security measures within the Unit are very much unimposing. The only noticeable form of security and control is reliant upon the observations of staff in relation to where prisoners actually are situated in the Unit, and to prisoners' personal traits and sudden changes in their characters. This is particularly true for Category 'A' prisoners who have to be physically checked up on by staff and registered in record books every 15 minutes. Control in Shotts Unit is very much reliant on human awareness within the spaces of the Unit, rather than the confines of the Unit itself. The environment within which staff and prisoners co-exist is 'encouraging' in form, to the smallest detail, with painted window bars, decorated recreation and work facilities and the provision of books, plants, a T.V., a snooker table and armchairs to create an aesthetically relaxing space where confrontation and frustration can be appeased and past experiences perhaps even forgotten.

As will become evident in Chapter VII, the emphasis placed upon disguising and manipulating the physical environment to a psychological end has not necessarily had the desired effect of breaking down and removing the stereotypical barriers ingrained within the prison subculture (and through the perceptions of individuals themselves and their past experiences). It is evident that the utilisation and design of space has been manipulated once again by both prisoners and staff to the same end- that of power. Prisoners have taken advantage of this new environment, and in attempt to remain within its comfortable surroundings, have adopted the role of the 'passive' prisoner. A 'Them and Us' situation continues to exist, but in relation to the circumstances in which it is allowed to do so. What is evident is that prisoners are aware that they do have something to lose and so, in this sense, the 'quality of space' factor and their relaxed interaction with it (the physical and psychological manipulation of space) are important factors determining the form the Unit subculture adopts. This will be explored more fully in Chapter VII.

The regime operating within the Unit has been developed as a consultative style of management, reflecting a community approach, yet at the same time "keeping a regime which is anchored close to that prevailing in the mainstream prisons" (Governor: Feb. 1993). Staff and prisoner Working Groups consider most of the issues that affect the daily life of the Unit. Meetings take place on a Tuesday within the main concourse and both staff and prisoners are given the opportunity to air their grievances. An arena for debate is encouraged, the onus being on the prisoners to deal with problems before the problems deal with them. 'Special Meetings' may be called when particular problems are considered to be an emergency. Through consultation and debate, the Unit attempts to dispel discord by providing the means for confrontation within a set space and time and as part of the regime. Prisoners and staff are therefore both given an opportunity to channel their frustrations, rather than allow them to fester and multiply with the risk of an outburst. If such an outburst does occur, serious action is taken, usually resulting in the individual prisoner being expelled from the Unit and sent to serve the remainder of his sentence in the mainstream. It is this threat of expulsion mentioned earlier, that proves an important control element within the unit, not only in relation to the prisoners' potential loss of facilities, but also the manner in which Shotts Unit prisoners are perceived as having an 'easy time' - the symbolic nature of the Unit stigmatising those who have served sentences there and therefore existing as a determinant of prisoners' treatment within the mainstream (as happens in relation to prisoners from Peterhead prison).

Prisoners are subjected to a relatively unstructured day. Meals are served at particular times and, along with the lock-up between 5pm and 6pm for the staff meal and a 9pm lock-up for the evening, little else structures time in the unit. Prisoners and staff are encouraged to eat together at set times in an attempt to aid relationships, although are not obliged to do so, this having important implications for an increase in tension in the Unit (see Chapter VII). Recreation facilities include a snooker table, craft table, books, T.V and video recorder, a multi-gym and a 5-a-side football pitch (which incidentally is only large enough for 3-a-side teams).



Prisoners may work if they so choose, although are required to fulfil 20 hours on a Progressive Course which can take the form of anything from picture framing to painting gnomes. These articles are often sold outside the Unit with a percentage of the money going to a chosen charity and the rest to the prisoner for both materials and profit. Emphasis in the Unit is placed on prisoners being responsible for their own personal time and space, in an attempt to help them reassert their own identities. This reproduction and re-perception of the meanings attached to the spaces prisoners inhabit is very much reliant upon the past experiences of these prisoners and how they have been treated (particularly with regards to serving time on lock-down, often for several months). The spaces within the Unit are therefore manipulated psychologically as a means to encourage prisoners to re-establish identities, relationships and trust. This approach is subsequently different to the mainstream prisons, where the physical confines of the prison are used to develop social relations and trust etc.. It is only with the implementation of 'Sentence Planning' in the mainstream prisons that this approach has been re-evaluated and a more psychological and social approach has been introduced.

One of the main features of the Unit is the visiting facilities. As expressed in a statement made by the Governor of the Unit:

Time allowed for and the environment in which visits take place, encourages increased family contact. This contact has proved to be vital in the development of a more responsible attitude in most of the prisoners who have come to the unit" (February 1993).

Prisoners are allowed up to three visitors at a time and three visits a week for up to two hours each. Situated on the other side of the 'grill-gate' (which separates the main concourse and prisoner cells from the staff facilities), the visiting facilities are somewhat separate from the living area of the Unit and adjacent to the officers' administration section. This was raised as a point of contention by the prisoners, who have constantly requested that visits be held in-cell as at Barlinnie Special Unit. The grill-gate separating prisoners and officers exists as both a physical and psychological barrier, its design and sliding operation being a stark reminder for both staff and prisoners that the Unit is essentially a small maximum security prison.

The facilities available are certainly spacious in layout and considerate of privacy in design. Comfortable bench seats are provided around the walls with temporary partitioning separating small sections. No officers are fully visible, only around a corner in an adjacent room, whilst music is allowed to be played during visits to drown out conversations and prevent overhearing by officers and other prisoners. Many of these 'extras', such as partitioning walls and a stereo unit were additional items to the original layout after requests were made at the 'Tuesday Meetings'. In this instance, prisoners have been given a positive opportunity to manipulate their own space to their own ends. Due to a perceived trust element between staff and prisoners, observation and body searches are not required of prisoners or their visitors. As will be discussed in Chapter V, this has important connotations for the creation of a relaxed environment within the Unit.

Prisoners are also provided with telephones within the main concourse. Calls made by Category 'A' prisoners are monitored, although no mail is itself censored. It is important to emphasise here the extent to which prisoners are in contact with family and friends in the spaces outwith the Unit. Not only are frequent visits encouraged each week, but phonecalls can be made at any time, and radios and T.Vs provide constant information about what is going on in the world outside. The availability of these facilities serve to psychologically open up the confines of the prison. This can have a derogatory effect on prisoners, in that they are made acutely aware of the spaces they are confined to, and by the time they have to serve in these spaces. It is thus important to recognise both advantages and disadvantages of a normalised environment within prison, in that it can prove to be both rehabilitative and oppressive.

Theoretically, prisoners are given ample opportunity to spend time alone in their cells, away from staff, prisoners and more relevantly, noise. However in practice this is not so: category 'A' prisoners have to be constantly checked up on every 15 minutes; meal times and tea-breaks tend to be continuous, with absences being noted by other prisoners and staff, and questions asked as to the reasons for these absences, with the aim of determining just how adjusted an individual is to the Unit's environment and regime; T.V., telephones and visits provide constant contact with the outside world and in relation to

neighbouring cell-mates, can quite easily disturb and annoy. In essence, survival in Shotts Unit relies very much upon an individual's tolerance and his ability to maintain the role of a 'passive prisoner'. It was emphasised during the interviews that the Unit's regime essentially operates as a facade, with both staff and prisoners attempting to play very different roles from the stereotypical parts they are used to. As will become evident in Chapter V and VII, it is only when discrepancies between the two groups arise, that these roles break down and individuals revert to their former identities and stereotypical roles.

## **Conclusions**

In outlining the prisons researched, this chapter has sought to characterise examples of the manner in which the authorities manipulate the spaces of the prison as a form of power, utilising and re-producing them in both a physical and psychological form. The structure of the prison in relation to its age, design, location, regime (according to the categories of prisoners it detains) and the image it attempts to represent in terms of discipline, security and control is very much influenced by the action of those imposing its meaning (the staff) and the recipients of this imposition (the prisoners) and the meanings these groups attach to these spaces. Each group identifies with particular areas of the prison, expressing this identification as a form of power emanating from the action of individuals, this identification affecting prisoners' behaviour within these spaces and their quality of relationships with staff. Physical barriers have essentially become manifest as psychological barriers through the perceptions of these groups, the meanings they attach to these spaces being very much historically determined and deeply rooted within the traditions of the prison subculture. Different areas of the prison may be identified as spaces of retreat, relief, fear, danger or safety for either group, these meanings existing as the outcome of years of power struggles between the staff and prisoners within these spaces.

These spaces of the prison act as media for expressing identity and power for both prisoners and officers. In expressing such power, each group, whether intentionally or not, utilises space within the prison as an arena for the expression of stereotypical behaviour in accordance with the roles they have

adopted. Psychological barriers are put in place as a means of protecting the real 'self' and identity during these struggles and within these spaces. It is essentially the adoption of this behaviour which proves to be restrictive in relation to the interaction of staff and prisoners and the development of 'encouraging' relationships, this in turn producing a 'them and us' situation both socially and spatially. Thus the physical spatial restrictions of the prison do not only determine psychological restrictions - these psychological restrictions inherently reproduce these spatial restrictions. It becomes a two-way relationship, one that can only be broken by the true recognition of this power ethic within both camps as well as recognition of the point from which this need for power emanates. This can only be done by recognising the origins of the power ethic emanating from this 'crisis of legitimacy', where both social groups are unable to justify or identify with their roles simply as 'jailers' or 'inmates' and where the need for such a justification and need for identity has manifest itself in the form of a spatial power struggle within the confines of the prison.

In order to establish the relevance of the material confines of the prison (the fabric, design, architecture) to this perceived 'crisis of legitimacy', it is necessary to take into account an additional factor: that of the role of administration by the authorities, and it is to this which I now turn.

## CHAPTER V

### *Institutional Space II*

In this chapter I will attempt to show how the regimes and policies implemented by the authorities as a means of manipulating the routine and everyday lives of prisoners and officers, are very much bound up with the internal design, layout and use of the physical spaces within the prison (the micro-geographies of the prison detailed in Chapter IV). Prison regimes manipulate the manner in which space is used and therefore have important implications for the production of the social and symbolic spaces of the prison (how these physical spaces are used and what they actually mean and represent to prisoners and officers).

This chapter examines particular aspects of how prison governors and officers have sought in recent years to use new, and especially different kinds of administrative arrangements within the physical perimeters of the prison to cope with, and attend to, the so-called 'crisis' in the prisons. These arrangements (primarily the strategy of 'Sentence Planning' and the resultant 'Personal Officer Scheme') are essentially bound up with issues of information, language and communication within and through space. The mechanisms which are adopted force prisoners and officers to reassess their identities and knowledges of the stereotypical 'other' and to become more attentive to one another as 'individuals' with personal opinions, interpretations and experiences: to sit down and listen to one another and glean relevant information. This form of social control effectively uses a subtle command of communication (through language and information flows) as a way of enabling the individuals involved to access the 'other': get to know the person behind the prisoner or officer uniform.

In assessing these new regimes in Scottish prisons, I argue that they are essentially a means of reasserting the identities of the individual, (playing up the dimensions of individual responsibility, attitude, ability to plan ahead, ability to become a worthy citizen etc.). The manoeuvres involved also legitimate officers' and prisoners' roles and statuses, thereby fragmenting group identities (particularly prisoners' group identities associated with a



'safety in numbers' element). Although appealing at one level, it also has the effect of imposing a greater degree of control over prisoners: of getting to know them, the issues which are important to them and breaking down the social barriers between them and officers. It is not a bad thing, but something which prisoners are aware of, particularly in relation to the manner in which it is adopted, offering prisoners opportunities to plan their sentences efficiently but on application, being unable to back up the rhetoric with the necessary resources.

In implementing these regimes, physical prison spaces are used as a 'carrot': to represent and symbolise progression through the system. However, the restrictions on the quantity and quality of these spaces available are the very things which are creating dissatisfaction amongst staff and prisoners and furthermore causing a reorientation back to group identity, assertion of the 'authorities verses inmate' relationship and re-establishment of the knowledge and expectations of the 'other'. A 'crisis of legitimacy' is thus being reproduced as a direct consequence of an attempt to avert it. In order to appreciate fully this development from a 'crisis' situation to an attempt at prevention and back to a 'crisis' situation, it is necessary to view the process historically. What follows therefore, is an examination of how this crisis has been viewed in the past and what attempts have been made to alleviate it.

### **Prison crisis - an administrative approach**

In the past, certain academics have preferred to view these crises as pertaining to that of 'Authority and Control' - in essence explanations that are concerned with administrative issues emanating from those at the frontier of the system - officers. Fitzgerald and Sim (1982) clearly emphasise how officers are increasingly becoming antagonised by the undermining of their authority within the prisons. Moves towards normalisation (making prison environments more 'normal' and 'homelike') challenge officers' perceptions of "control, good order and security" (p.11) in what is interpreted as a system that is giving way to prisoner requirements and therefore prisoner control.

Staff unrest has always proven to be a significant outcome of this loss in authority. Widespread disruptive action in the late 1970s prompted the

establishment of the May Inquiry<sup>1</sup>, which itself failed to satisfy the Prison Officers' Association (POA), resulting in the mid 1980s with the worst riots to date. These riots were blamed on protest action by officers and a national overtime ban. Such 'crises of authority' are therefore connected to expressions of power by staff. This need for consistent control can have adverse effects on the maintenance of order in prisons with officers constantly aware of the need to establish their autonomy as custodians. In his penultimate chapter, Sykes (1958) emphasises this point when considering the riots at New Jersey State Prisons in 1952. Here he states how any understanding of a crisis must "rest on an understanding of the larger evolutionary sequence of which they are a part", which, as Sykes explains, is:

"the shifting status of what has been called the 'semi-official self-government exercised by the inmate population'; the 'effort of the custodians to tighten up the prison undermines the cohesive forces at work in the inmate population and it is these forces which play a critical part in keeping the society of the prison on an even keel'" (p.124).

Such an approach has been seriously criticised as suggesting that prison administration is itself a 'pawn' of the inmate social system (DiIulio: 1990, p.45). Such a view only proves to limit the importance placed by Sykes on the powers of interpretation of either group, of shifts in control and the degree to which these groups are willing to act to maintain such control. In reality, knowledge of the 'other' and reaction to this 'knowledge' pertains to a specific social context within a specific time and place. To generalise outwith this social context is to lose the individuality of those experiencing and producing this crisis. It is also to ignore prisoners' and officers' powers of expression and perception, operating in the form of 'networks of power'. These 'networks of power' develop from a reproduction of the cohesiveness of the social group (on a group level) and the protection of the 'self' within that group.

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<sup>1</sup> A Committee of Inquiry set up on 17th November 1978, chaired by Mr. Justice May to enquire into the state of industrial relations, the use of resources effectively and the organisation and management of the prison services in England & Wales. Limited reference was given to the Scottish system and it has since been concluded that the overall main achievement was to settle the original problem of pay for prison officers. The report had limited impact on the organisational structure of the Scottish Prison System, which the SPOA and Scottish Prison Governors perceived at that time as needing radical changes (Coyle: 1991).

Jacobs, in his scholarly work 'Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society' (1977), examines the relevance of administrative changes, detailing a shift away from the order and control imposed by Joseph Ragen, who ruled Stateville with an "iron fist"- towards a different system involving the "rigid adherence to formal rules and regulations covering virtually every aspect of prison life" (DiUllio: 1990, p.44). On employment, Pate (the new prison governor) produced widespread discontentment in the prison by allowing the intervention of external forces and inviting public bodies into the prison establishment, thereby making the "prison's boundaries.....permeable to the outside" (Jacobs: 1977, p.204). As Jacobs states, the post-Ragen administrators transformed Stateville "from a patriarchal organisation based upon traditional authority, to a rational legal bureaucracy"(p.73) which experienced eventual large scale disruptions. Shifts towards the 'unknown' and transition of prisoners' and officers' roles established under the Ragen administration, which both groups were knowledgeable of (the rules, regulations and therefore social boundaries), produced a situation in which both prisoners and officers were unsure of one another and their own social statuses. They felt the need (and possessed the opportunity) to re-assert new identities, and make new claims and demands within this transformed system, thereby causing disruption within the prison.

Such an analysis emphasises how a "professionally-oriented central administration" with "comprehensive rules and regulations" (Jacobs: 1977) provided prisoners with the chance to gain a degree of control politically and eventually spatially in the prison, through the take-over of certain parts of the prison by inmates. The ability of the prisoners to make such moves suggests their need to express autonomy at all times unless suppression of these tendencies is permanent, as under the Ragen administration. In essence, Jacobs places his sociological analysis in the context of group identity and expression of power through the medium of administration and communication within and between staff and prisoner groups. Strong leadership qualities from the top and rigid standards as adopted by Ragen, provided lower grade members of staff with express confidence in the regime, and therefore their own sense of autonomy and identification of themselves as custodians within a rigid unwavering system.

This 'knowledge as power' ethic arguably exists as an important element in the present 'crisis of prison authority'. The provision of information and communication of this information through the ranks and to prisoners determines the extent to which prison officers can carry out their tasks efficiently and maintain authority through confidence in the system and identification of their role as a necessary part of that system. This is particularly apparent in Scotland. As Andrew Coyle (1991) explains in "Inside Scotland's Prisons":

"The attitude of the prison officer is of particular significance in any consideration of prison organisation. He falls into that category whose work is uniquely to do with people...The prison officer is at the same time a worker in his (sic) relations with management and his response to a system of controls and regulations from above, and also a manager in his interaction with prisoners" (p.178).

This dual role of the interactive 'worker' between both management and prisoners proves in many instances to be particularly difficult when the media of communication are not properly developed and ad hoc. Provision of insufficient information from the upper strata of prison management, and inadequate justification of this information, places the officer in a compromising and often confrontational position with prisoners, where he or she is forced to implement regulations without being able to offer any explanation or recognition of aims. Historically, disregard for explanations of the implementation of particular new and different strategies in the prison establishments by prison officers, alongside the overall inherent secrecy of the system, existed as an important determinant of autonomy:

"Control over communication produced effects normally associated with direct exercise of executive power; i.e. it established the hierarchy of organisation as actually perceived by the inmates, selectively emphasised certain values, inculcated attitudes, adapted the functions of some units to the service of others, and maintained discipline within the staff" (McCleery 1960, p.49).

In more recent times, prisoners' access to channels of communication through visits, television and radio and a more normalised environment, coupled to the cultivation of an attitude based upon the personal responsibility of the prisoner, has itself provided prisoners with knowledge of the system and a degree of confidence to question the system's viability and to demand

justification for its actions. It has been established in Scotland that this is indeed the case and that any deficiency of communication networks between management and staff have effectively proven debilitating to the maintenance of control. As Coyle (1991) states:

“any attempt to alter or expand the goals of the prison system must be able to count on the tacit support, or at least the non-opposition, of the prison officer. This fact has not always been borne in mind...as the prison system has set itself increasingly reformatory goals, the prison officer has been excluded from their implementation” (p.178).

The clear identification of an individual officer's role and status is paramount to the efficiency with which their role is implemented:

“...prison security is likely to be enhanced the more the officers are made to feel an integral rather than a second-rate part of the organisation. This is an expression of the principle that generally speaking the less an organisation alienates its personnel the more efficient it is likely to be, the more job satisfaction employees have, the harder they are likely to work” (Coyle: 1991, p.178-179).

This efficiency itself exists as an expression of the group identity of the officer. In all the study prisons, it was established that to a large extent this identification exists not as an expression of control, but as a form of confrontation and alienation between prisoners and officers and officers and management. In the majority of cases, officers indicated how they are effectively sandwiched between both groups, with limited degrees of communication. This has enhanced a feeling of reduced control and autonomy for officers within the establishments, where prisoners have been provided with the means to gain autonomy through the availability of communication networks (between halls and the outside) and the availability of their own personal possessions:

Many of the prisoners here have possessions and things which people outside don't have access to. They get showered, fed and bedded daily. I'm not saying it's wrong. It just makes our job harder. PO2 Shotts

If you give a prisoner too much then they want to take over. There is a conflict and you get no respect from the prisoner. It snowballs on and on and the next thing you know, you have trouble in the halls. PO2 Castle Huntly



In Barlinnie, if you got pissed off with someone, you could put them in their cell and shut the door and that was it. Problem solved. Here you can't do that. If somebody has a problem with me I have to confront it and it's a hard thing to do. PO1 Shotts Unit

This increased degree of autonomy over a prisoner's own space determines whether or not the prisoner or the system has control over his/her 'self'. Goffman (1968) views this as being an important determinant of a statement of control over the 'self', and proposes a correlation between dispossession of the 'self' and efficiency of the institution:

"The personal possessions of an individual are an important part of the materials out of which he (sic) builds a self, but as an inmate, the ease with which he is managed by staff is likely to increase with the degree to which he is dispossessed" (Goffman: 1968, p.76)

Dissatisfaction amongst staff does not vary with age or design of prison or type of prisoner, but with their own perceptions of the rigidity of the regime and their role within a more normalised environment. Where prisoners are deemed to be gaining increased autonomy and privileges through the implementation of a more flexible system, officers experience feelings of reduced control. As is apparent above, officers certainly believed this to be the case. This is contrary to the expected situation, where prisoners who are detained under privileged conditions are usually easier to control due to the length of sentence left to serve and the fact that they are moving towards release from prison. Whatever the case, prison officers perceive prisoners as a threat under all conditions and within all environments, and therefore believe that prisoners should be subject to all manners of security. However, as is made clear earlier on in this thesis, an historical examination of the rioting in prison establishments throughout Scotland, reveals that such action did not only occur in Category 'A' prison or low grade halls. These outbursts were not initiated by prisoners merely as a reaction to the environments in which they are imprisoned and dissatisfaction with them.

### **Maintenance of the self - the expression of individuality through language**

It is evident from the above that the administrative explanations for a crisis in the prison system are necessary, but not sufficient as explanations. These

approaches are misleading in that they automatically assume the roles of the staff and prisoners as actors ignorant of their existence as both cohesive groups and individuals. Even the more humanist texts, such as those by Goffman (1968) and Clemmer (1958) implicitly emphasise the form imprisonment (and its impact) adopts rather than the responsiveness of those on whom it is imposed and operates. Sykes (1958) and Menninger (1968) recognise this as an important failing in the understanding of the social organisation of the prison. They recognise the existence of both a "cohesive inmate society" and a "meaningful social group" providing support for prisoners who themselves use this to maintain the 'self' in terms of "dignity, composure and courage" as dictated by the "inmate code" (p 16,17). Sykes (1958) and Menninger (1968) illustrate how such a 'code' relating to the expected and accepted behaviour of prisoners towards one another and staff exists as a verbal system of 'values' that has "group cohesion or inmate solidarity as its basic theme"(Sykes: 1958, p.17).

Such an expressive form of identification will be examined later, but what is important here is how language within the prison subculture and communication between prisoners and staff is used to express the boundaries of acceptance within this subculture. Communication amongst prisoners and between them and staff, form the networks of cohesion, acceptance and self-esteem. Through language and expression:

"prisoners uphold the ideal of a system of social interaction in which individuals are bound together by ties of mutual aid, loyalty, affection and respect and are united firmly in their opposition to the enemy outgroup" (p.11).

However, such a system exists in relation to officers whose expressive language itself bonds them as a group and exists as an expression of autonomy and control over the spaces of the prison and where good communication networks are perceived as instrumental to tight security. As Berger and Luckmann (1991 p.36) state "language marks the co-ordinates of my life in society and fills that life with meaningful objects". Thus the spaces of the prison are themselves determined in terms of their existence and use, through the system of language, this language acting as an expression of either group's perceptions of what these spaces mean to them and their

personal interpretations of the restrictive boundaries in which they exist. This 'knowledge' and hence reality of the prison structure through language and expression is justified by both prisoners and staff by its social relativity. As Berger and Luckmann explain:

"What is real to a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an American businessman. The knowledge of the criminal differs from the knowledge of the criminologist. It follows that specific agglomerations of reality and knowledge pertain to specific social contexts and that these relationships will have to be included in an adequate sociological analysis of these contexts"(p.15).

As emphasised earlier these interpretations or 'knowledge' are developed and maintained through language, expression and communication. The relevance of these networks of communication to both staff and prisoners are threefold. One, they give support to group cohesiveness; two, they exist as expressions of autonomy and control (and with particular reference to this chapter are subtle ways by which prison authorities seek to intervene in the processes of the maintenance of the prisoners' 'self' as a method of socially controlling prisoners); three, and more importantly, they extend the boundaries of the prison, infiltrating restricted spaces and further developing cohesiveness within groups. Communication not only extends the boundaries of the prison through visits, television and radio and the provision of information as an expression of power and control over the prisoners' spaces outwith the walls, but also exists as a means of control and autonomy internally, not only for staff but also prisoners and between groups. It is evident that the control of individuals is produced through using stereotyped identities of 'prisoner' and 'officer' to legitimate attitudes towards each group. These identities are contested and extended through verbal support systems and communication channels, officers and prisoners using these identities to express power and autonomy within and, more importantly, between groups.

### **Managing the Crisis: The production of space through language**

By incorporating the idea of the relevance of 'communication as power' in the management of this 'crisis', I am attempting to emphasise the importance of the power and autonomy of the responsive human being to such a crisis. Individuals' experiences and responses to particular situations are borne out

of a need to create identity, legitimate social status and assert a sense of personal control within the spaces of the prison. This power is mediated through communication channels between staff and prisoners and as such has important implications for the management and control of this perceived 'crisis'. This next section will address this and provide evidence to suggest a need to incorporate a more person-responsive approach to penalty - one that emphasises the relevance of the need for legitimisation of status by those individuals experiencing and endorsing the system.

The recognition of communication channels as media for generating degrees of power and control for staff and prisoners has had important implications for the structuring of prison regimes and more importantly the production of space (and the meanings duly attached to this space). The stringent Silent and Separate systems of the 1800s are good examples where communication was centred on the governor and chief prison warders, often from a vantage position in the prison. Such an authoritative observational command of information asserted its dominance through suppression of the individual 'self' (both psychologically and physically) with the implementation of conformity to the rules and constant surveillance from officials. Emphasis was thus placed on the individual to conform - in essence, behaviour of prisoners was translated into moralistic terms in relation to the 'self' and individual as being capable of initiating a change in behaviour (this was very much the argument put forward by Foucault (1977) on the Panopticon and the manner in which 'panopticism' was supposed to work - see Chapter III). As Goffman (1968) explains, such behaviour:

"rationalises activity, provides a subtle means of maintaining social distance from inmates and a stereotypical view of them and justifies the treatment accorded them"(p.84).

This absolute form of control thus existed not merely as a power ethic over prisoners, but also over staff, where their actions were justified and their social statuses enforced.

In more recent times such bold attempts at reformation through the 'enhancement' of the 'self' has been replaced by a more subtle system which attempts to "assist the individual to return to the community more able to act

as a responsible citizen and to cope both personally in himself and with his environment" (Opportunity and Responsibility: 1990,p.30). This utilisation of and assistance to the 'self' is still similar to the manner in which control was imposed in the past, but is more obviously directed at the social welfare of the prisoner rather than his/her moral situation. Control over prisoner observation and the suppression of prisoner communication networks - strategies emanating from the top of the official hierarchy - are no longer aimed at forcing individuals to internalise responsibility for their actions, persuading them into a moral awareness of themselves as deviants, as was true in earlier times. Instead, strategies exist as attempts to provide external checks and balances on prisoner behaviour, through the manipulation of communication channels between prisoners and officers at the point where such control is implemented. The utilisation of this point of interaction for increased control exemplifies how an interactive form of communication (where the prisoner is invited to express him/herself in order for staff to assist and understand his/her behaviour), is implemented as a control mechanism. Here, knowledge of an individual prisoner is viewed as a degree of control over that individual, the 'self' being coerced and manipulated by the authorities in such a way as to increase authority.

In Scotland, the onus placed on the individual to accept responsibility for his/her actions has been translated into the strategy 'Sentence Planning', encouraging prisoners to accept responsibility for their actions by providing them with opportunities for responsible choice, personal development and self-improvement. This is, therefore, the new administrative version of the social-moral management of the 'self', attempted by the likes of Bentham (1791), less dependent on the physical manipulation of prison space but more a psychological re-appraisal of its usefulness in relation to security, control and order.

### **Sentence Planning - a psychological approach to prison crisis**

Implemented in June 1993, the scheme is aimed at encouraging and enabling

"each prisoner to share in a decision making process relating to how he (sic) spends his sentence" (Opportunity and Responsibility 1990, p.30). This includes four principle features:



"6.1 Providing information for the prisoner rather than just taking information from him." This involves making prisoners "aware of all the options" available through prospectuses and videos.

"6.2 Providing a self analysis package for the prisoner to work through" - highlighting the role of the officer as a councillor who is able to address the prisoners' problems outside of the prison boundary in relation to offence, family, work and personal skills.

"6.3 Developing the role of the prison officer as facilitator" - promoting the image of the prison officer as accommodating and approachable for prisoners and their problems.

"6.4 Involving the prisoner in the decision-making process" attempting to improve communication between staff and prisoners. (See Chapter III)

In essence the scheme is an attempt to improve relationships between staff and prisoners by providing an arena in which trust can be developed between each group. Its criteria are based on the belief that the availability of choice of prison for prisoners to serve their sentence, facilities to take advantage of during their sentence and a medium for improved communication between themselves and staff, will remove the element of suspicion between the groups and provide a more relaxed and progressive environment within the prison. Such a scheme may be viewed as an important attempt to socialise the problem, through a re-evaluation of the use of space within the establishment, perceiving it more as an outcome of the environment in which prisoners serve their sentences and the facilities available to them. It theoretically provides prisoners with decision-making powers related to their physical surroundings (the actual prison confines), and at the same time attempts to accommodate their individual problems and interpretations of their current situation through the Personal Officer Scheme<sup>2</sup>. The scheme is an attempt to break down barriers, improve communication and simultaneously counter prisoners' problems by viewing them as being internally, socially and spatially manifest both physically (within the particular prison and in relation to the facilities available) and psychologically (in relation to the meanings attached to the spaces inside and outside of the prison and the social relations which take place between prisoners and officers in these spaces).

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<sup>2</sup> A scheme by which prisoners choose staff to act as Personal Officers to help them through the decision-making process of Sentence Planning (see SPS:1992; SPS:1993).

Unfortunately such a scheme has proven to be rather idealistic in form. The scheme relies on the ability of an individual to view their sentence as a necessary and positive form of retribution through which they can learn to become more responsible individuals. This emphasis on 'individuality' exists as a mechanism by which prisoners are encouraged to identify with and express themselves and their feelings and problems as a means of coping with their sentence. Each prisoner is assigned a Personal Officer (a prison officer from their hall and often own landing), invited to speak of any personal concerns and plan their sentence in relation to where and how they wish to serve it. They are provided with particular choices in accordance with their security category and place they originally lived, as well as assessment by their personal officers of their attitude towards their sentence and attainments during it. The adoption of these channels of communication may be viewed as a definite shift towards the recognition of the prisoner as an individual and a repossession of identity and status.

However, such a realignment in approach must be considered with due care. The reproduction of a prison environment based on trust and confidentiality between staff and prisoners, has experienced problems. Tradition and experience have constantly promoted the stereotypical 'officers versus prisoner' relationship to the extent that the meanings attached to these roles (in relation to attempts to gain autonomy by each of them) have become deeply embedded. In effect, a new order is being implemented where social boundaries in the prison are being infiltrated by greater flows of information and more relaxed channels of communication. Prisoners are sceptical - as will become clear, they fear the transition not only in relation to mistrusting the system and the promises made but in maintaining their group identity and therefore preventing fragmentation and a subsequent reduction in autonomy.

Many problems have arisen in relation to the implementation of the scheme availability of spaces for prisoners after having chosen where they would like to serve their sentence; and more importantly, with regards to trust between staff and prisoners (SPS: 1992; 1993). Communication has effectively been hampered, not only in the actual attempt by staff to engage in a more trustworthy relationship with prisoners and endorse a new social order, but by the manner in which the prison service has actually gone about it. All

prison officers assigned as Personal Officers are obliged to document communications between themselves and the prisoners in what is perceived as a record of 'positive developments'.

Such recording of information is itself viewed by prisoners as evidence of staff attempting to document, understand and be aware of individual prisoners and their personal characteristics for purposes of a more effective form of control. 'Sentence Planning' exists as a way of further removing a prisoner's individual identity and the mystery of the 'self', subsequently providing staff with more personal information for methods of discipline:

The place is built for them and not me. They've come from a restricted background like Peterhead prison and are coming in here and talking to staff. Staff can't get away from them and they can't get away from staff so they have to confront it. At the end of the day we can sit down and chat about our grievances and I think that is better for the prisoner. It gives him more confidence and he doesn't feel under threat. PO2 Shotts Unit

It would be a good thing when it is fully functional. Just now it is just coming in. It will be good for things like Personal Officers. I've got two prisoners who I am the Personal Officer to, so you find out more about the prisoner, they talk to you more, things like that. Part of it is like - opportunities and responsibilities. It is a good thing because they realise they could only muck it up themselves. When they do they might try and put the blame on you or somebody else. PO1 Perth

The 'Sentence Planning' I think is essential to try and let people know what is happening and what is available to them and then at the end of the day anybody comes back to you and says they were not told they could do this or do that you can turn round and say I beg to differ, you were at 'Sentence Planning' at such and such a time and you were told about it, and tell them if they didn't act on it; it gives them more options. We also know that they have been told about it - the various things involved in 'Sentence Planning' so its a lot easier for us to explain to them what the procedure is. They know some of the procedure because they have been told before, so it gives them a lot more options. PO3 Perth

They have got to be taken as responsible people which is fine in a general term but when it comes down to the end of the day we've still got to maintain control and security. PO3 Perth

With the implementation of the scheme, confidentiality and trust are encouraged to become replacements for fear and insecurities for both staff and prisoners. In reality, and in the practical manner in which the strategy is being carried out, it exists as a medium through which further mistrust is fuelled. From this it can be established how, once again, power is being exerted through the medium of fear of the unknown and an enhanced emphasis on a form of dynamic security, based upon social interaction and the development of trust through this interaction:

It will allow staff to get to know prisoners better. They will be able then to gauge if there are going to be problems, because the danger is with prisoners, if you cannot gauge them and you don't try to understand them, then you can't gauge changes in mood and that is when you are going to get a problem. If you find a change in the mood, you pull the prisoner aside, it could be something stupid, it could be a telephone call that went wrong and he can't get his wife in, it could be a letter which came in or something like that, and it can be quite easily solved, it could be his diet, it could be anything, unless you can judge the change in his moods, and be able to talk to him about it, then you have a problem and he is going to do something, like try to escape to resolve the problem, which doesn't resolve the problem, but he thinks it will at that time, or he will cause an assault, things like that. If we have Personal Officers speaking to prisoners and knowing them intimately, then they are going to be able to spot these problems and that is how we have better security. Gov1 Peterhead

Now prisoners are being told or offered, they are now being reported on and they see this report and sign it, so that report is not done behind their back, for example 'this prisoner is a trouble-maker', you can still write that down if you firmly believe that, and the prisoner knows what you are writing about which is good, so now their file is built up on reports which they see. There is nothing put in their file without their knowledge, so they now know, and that is a big advantage. Gov2 Perth

In an Interim Report (SPS: An Evaluation of the Sentence Planning Initiative), it was also established that prison officers were having problems 'opening up' to prisoners during the interviews as Personal Officers:

"Staff accept open reporting but also prefer to use the older narrative system of closed reporting. This older system allows for any officer to write comments about a prisoner's behaviour on a standard form and is designed to enable all officers who come into contact with a prisoner

to be aware of any issues which may be influencing this person. With this open "semi-secret" system, prisoners do not know all of what is written about them. Some staff claim that if you write down a prisoner's details, then such comments should be openly available; others claim they would not read out another member of staff's comments. Clearly the idea of fully open reporting has not been realised. Certain governors and operations staff also feel that open reporting and Sentence Planning run the risk of telling the prisoner too much." (p.3)

It is evident from the above how any attempt to improve conditions, facilities and relationships in prison can be severely hampered by the subculture of the prison and the past experiences on which this subculture is based and thrives. It must be emphasised how any attempt to review the situation must be whole-heartedly considerate of the manner in which prisoners and staff attach meanings to and interpret specific situations and spaces. The degree to which these perceptions differ exists as a form of expressing individuality, maintaining a sense of autonomy over the 'self' and legitimising an individual's position. As Goffman establishes in 'Asylums' (1968), on entering total institutions such as prisons, individuals experience role dispossession, stripped of their belongings and appearance and made,

"to engage in activities whose symbolic implications are incompatible with his(sic) conception of self" (p.31).

In total,

"these territories of the self are violated; the boundary that the individual places between his (sic) being and the environment is invaded and the embodiments of self profaned" (p.32).

Schemes such as 'Sentence Planning' are therefore perceived by both prisoners (and to a certain extent, staff), as highly organised attempts to collect, record and expose the individual for control purposes. As will be emphasised in Chapter VI, prisoners respond to this 'de-mystification process' by attempting to preserve their identity in order to maintain their own form of autonomy and assert themselves as individuals with status.



## The fragmentation of identity through language

The attention paid to the prisoner as an individual by the 'Sentence Planning' scheme, can be interpreted therefore as an attempt at the *fragmentation* of the existing prisoner social group and relations within that group, based on the characterisation of prisoners as 'weak' and 'irresponsible', and the perceived need by the authorities for the dissolution of the prisoner hierarchy. By accounting for prisoners as 'responsible' members of families and communities, and more importantly as individuals with feelings, worries and concerns within and outside the prison boundaries, the authorities are shifting emphasis away from the internal spaces of the prison and more immediate concerns of the prisoners and concentrating them upon the prisoner's external spaces over which he or she has little or no control. Such interpersonal communication exists as a form of psychological manipulation by the authorities. Indeed, identification and confrontation with these external spaces can have the undesired and opposite effect of reasserting the prisoner's own view of him/herself as 'deviant', when compared to the wider population, as well as questioning the justification and fairness of such a method of punishment. However, as is apparent in many cases in this study, the majority of prisoners interviewed are quite happy to "do their bird" by progressing through the system to better facilities and more relaxed regimes but at the same time were also extremely conscious of the authorities "getting to know you" approach:

You are telling the guy who is your personal officer, the guy you are really meant to sit down and tell your problems to in confidence and all the rest of it. It's just a control thing. P1 Castle Huntly

Prison officers are themselves, not fully receptive to the scheme of 'Sentence Planning'. Poor administration and inadequate levels of training were cited as the main reasons for this lethargy. At the time of this study, 'Sentence Planning' had not even been introduced in Peterhead prison. This further tends to emphasise that this prison is an establishment for the 'other' where sex offenders are segregated and not given the same opportunities as their fellow prisoners due to the perception of them as 'beasts' (the notion of their sexual crimes as being 'beastly' and therefore placing them at the bottom of

the prisoner social hierarchy). This view is endorsed by the inadequacies of resources available for these prisoners:

I haven't had any training for 'Sentence Planning'. PO3 Peterhead

Prisoners have three choices as to where they would like to serve their sentences. I have 126 prisoners waiting to come to Shotts. So it's not working - you don't sit and wait for your first choice. You should be moved to your second choice of establishment. Gov2 Shotts

We don't know enough about 'Sentence Planning' and haven't received any training. There is no-one to train officers. It's also true that it is the end of the road for these guys at Peterhead. They have nowhere to go. PO2 Peterhead

It will be quite effective in that it will give a prisoner a target to aim for but having said that is it going to increase their expectations? Peterhead is a place within itself. There will be 'Sentence Planning' only within certain limits and confined to Peterhead. If prisoners want to take advantage they have to come off of protection and go back to the mainstream. It is entirely up to them. PO4 Peterhead

Here it is emphasised how the ability to fully take advantage of 'Sentence Planning' is linked to an individual's ability to cope with the mainstream prison system. Through identification with the crimes prisoners have committed and the resultant establishment of the prisoner hierarchy, such prisoners are not allowed to serve their sentences in the normal environment due to the threat of retaliation from fellow inmates. The effective utilisation of the resources offered by the strategy is dictated by one's own identity within the subculture:

One of the important things of course is to try and let prisoners feel they have some say in how their sentence is going to unfold, and it would be nice if they could be in the jail which is nearest to their home and so on. Here we do have problems with regime and space, and prisoners are a long way from home. What we would hope is that as part of their 'Sentence Planning' say "I've got to try and do something about my offence" so they have to try to tackle something which is notoriously difficult for sex offenders to do. If they can deal with those issues then they might be less a risk to the public and if they pose less danger to the public they have a better chance of getting more of what the prison service has to offer in terms of home leave, moving on to less secure conditions and so on. Gov 2 Peterhead

The advantages of the 'Sentence Planning' scheme are viewed very much in relation to information supplied to staff. Evidence suggests how their lack of knowledge through inadequate training and information from the upper management strata, subsequently makes staff feel that they have suffered a loss of control over the prisoners and that in effect (and as a reaction to their perceived ignorance), 'Sentence Planning' is merely a tokenistic gesture aimed at calming the liberals in society:

Personally I think it is a pure and utter waste of time because the boys who are in here have been in before, so this is maybe second, third time 'Sentence Planning', they're come in, sit about for a fortnight, show a video, I mean they go down and watch it but it is a complete waste of time and resources. PO4 Castle Huntly

If they want to talk they will. They don't need 'Sentence Planning'. They need trust from the older staff. The prisoners find it patronising that the younger officers try to console them because some of them have laddies of their own, older than the officers. PO2 Shotts

Once again knowledge through communication exists as an expression of power - officers are adamant that information is insufficient and more importantly that the resources available to respond to the promises being made by the scheme are not adequate enough to deal with the aims of the strategy:

It is working here but other establishments, the problem arises because of categorising, because the old system was everybody came into a situation as a B cat prisoner unless they were an A cat prisoner, so all prisoners were then B cat prisoners so jails were built accordingly for B cat prisoners. Now we are classing far more B cat prisoners and more C cat prisoners and there is nowhere to put them or very few places to put them, so they have not got the choices they want, so there are B cat jails for D cat prisoners and get the same perks as a D cat prisoner, so that is more of a problem we are going to have. PO2 Castle Huntly

There is not enough variety or work. We give them an opportunity for example work to go to, but they can't because there is no spaces. If a man wants to go to Greenock but he can't because there is no spaces and he goes to Perth, what we are doing now, is we are bringing new ideas, facilities are required but the prison doesn't offer that so we are tying ad hoc, build on this and build on this. Gov5 Perth

For example I phoned up....about four weeks ago to try and get a prisoner moved and was told there was a three month waiting list.  
Gov5 Perth

'Sentence Planning' has implications in terms of resources, but it is simply a question of having an imaginative look at what you've got.  
Gov Castle Huntly

Several officers are also sceptical of the privileges available to prisoners:

They've revamped the allocation system, that's all. I think we are putting guys under pressure with the like of the Personal Officer scheme. These guys know it's a jungle out there. On their own, they are different from in a crowd. Majority will sit and say yes when they have to but when you get back into the hall or workshop they are completely different. PO2 Shotts Unit

I don't think I get anything out of it nor do the prisoners. It goes on here but only to such an extent because these guys have a lot of time to do and most of their plans...they're only here for a maximum of two to three years. The Governor really decides where the prisoner goes after this. The prisoner doesn't really have a choice. Only some options are available to some of them according to the length of their sentence. I'm a Personal Officer involving dealing with a prisoners day to day life in the unit. PO1 Shotts Unit

To believe it I'll have to see it work. I'm involved in 'Sentence Planning'. My prisoner has 35 years to do. He knows when he is getting out. He has his problems. A prisoner can choose two or three establishments which are all near his family but he may not get placed where he wants because there isn't room. All we're doing is really kidding the prisoner on. It raises false hopes. If we were to say to him you're in Perth but to satisfy him we'll promise him if he's good that he'll end up in Shotts within a year, he'll do that and then when the year is up, Shotts say it is still full because others have been told the same. PO3 Shotts Unit

Other officers recognise the need for a more normalised environment where choices are available for prisoners:

The thing with 'Sentence Planning', is taking your sentence in small chunks, small digestible chunks. Yes as you say it is quite difficult here, OK they can plan out what they maybe want to do as regards engineering, from that point of view, like you might want to go and do welding first, do the modules on that and then they might decide they

want to do car mechanics or body repair work, it is feasible in that sense. PO5 Castle Huntly

As Foucault succinctly states in 'Discipline and Punish' (1977):

"Our society is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance; under the surface of images, one invests bodies in depth; behind the great abstraction of exchange, there continues the meticulous, concrete training of useful forces; the circuits of communication are the supports of an accumulation and a centralisation of knowledge; the play of signs defines the anchorages of power; it is not that the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed altered by our social order, it is rather that the individual is carefully fabricated in it according to a whole technique of forces and bodies" (p. 217).

Through the inadequacies of the administration of the 'Sentence Planning' scheme, officers have found themselves lacking in what they perceive as sufficient resources or information to carry out their roles in a competent manner (a manner in which they can identify themselves as custodians). The "play of signs" in relation to officers' stereotypical values attached to these custodian roles are "fabricated" through the power relations between staff and management and staff and prisoners. What must be established is the fact that such a "technique of forces and bodies" should not be viewed as a mechanism by which the individual is rendered subordinate to such overwhelming powers (Foucault: 1977). Here, it is evident how perceptions of staff as being an identifiable homogenous group, as individuals in relation to their roles as custodians and the meanings attached to these roles in terms of power, both physical (security and custodial) and psychological (counselling and communicating), exist as important mediums for these anchorages of power. The objectives of the individual officer plays a significant role in the alteration and adoption of the social order, as it is through these individuals and the social relations they establish and utilise with prisoners and management, that the social order manifests itself and continues to exist. They are not merely pawns in the custodial process but facilitators in its execution and development.

Following on from this point, issues directly affecting staff such as pay, overtime, staffing levels and in more recent times market-testing and the threat of privatisation, have had significant implications for the running of the



prison. Implementation of schemes such as 'Fresh Start'<sup>3</sup> and publication of the May Inquiry in 1979 (see earlier) have initiated unrest amongst staff in relation to the resultant restructuring of working arrangements. The threat of privatisation and increased concern over job security for officers has become a crucial issue for those interviewed. Several express confidence in their abilities as disciplinarians and concern over the perception that the management of 'people' could become established within a competitive market:

You can't have private firms looking out for prisoners. You can't make money out of people in prison. PO4 Castle Huntly

The thoroughness of training and skills required to operate as a team (their group identity) are proposed as reasons for abandoning contracting out of prison services:

It's a terrible thing for the SPS because Group 4 won't have the dedication or training and won't be better. PO5 Peterhead

We're not in it to make a profit - you can't do that when you are dealing with people. PO2 Shotts Unit

The years they have put into training prisoners and the money they have spent, it has taken them years to develop all that, also college facilities for training officers to train other officers. They have a lot of knowledge and you can't just come in and take over a prison without that knowledge. If they say oh we will do this job for x number of money, it just wouldn't work. That's going back the way. PO1 Perth

I personally am totally against privatisation because if they are talking about privatisation where is the control, where is the standards. If you are talking about prison being for profit, I doubt very much you would get a good quality service. That is not to say our particular service doesn't need to be overhauled or reviewed, but I think the Scottish Prison Service in particular has made leaps and bounds in recent years and each individual governor you have probably picked up has now been given autonomy to look at the establishment and to develop it and I have given you examples already, without major impact in terms

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<sup>3</sup> Due to widespread dissatisfaction with the failure of the May Inquiry to directly tackle the problem of the pay structure of prison officers, a radical new set of proposals were established under the heading 'Fresh Start'. This resulted in a new management structure, unification of governor and prison officer grades and new working arrangements for staff (Coyle: 1991).

of costs, staff have come up with some very good ideas. Gov Castle Huntly

Some officers also recognise the resources required for such a major cultural shift:

I don't think they could take over like Perth prison privatised because then you couldn't use a system for upgrading prisoners because you have all different categories here. It's all right in England because they have a 'C' category prison or a 'D' category prison. In Scotland they are mixed, so it wouldn't work up here. PO1 Perth

I think privatisation - I can't see how an outside agency can come in and do the same job to the same standard as far as security and discipline. I very much doubt they could do it with the same manpower levels for the same sum of money. I don't think you could get people outside to do the job we are doing, and a better job at all, to be honest with you. PO3 Perth

I'd hate the idea of competing for jobs with untrained staff. Gov1 Cornton Vale

Others are in favour of such a shift:

It seems that we are linked into a broader political dogma that doesn't only apply to prisons. It applies to all the public services. For that reason we can't escape it. If someone can demonstrate by the end of the day what counts.....it depends who you ask. The prisoner is not really interested in whether or not the chap who is locking his door has got a Group 4 uniform an English prison service uniform or a Butlins Red Coat Uniform. The big issue for the man is that door is being locked and he doesn't want it locked. Then he focuses once he is locked in his cell, does he have one blanket, does he have two blankets, sheets, do they smell? It is who is going to decide what they can offer for a pound ...some people will say for a pound, that man's blankets will smell of an English Country Garden. Others will say sorry, if he is in first it will smell nice, if not he has to take pot luck. That is either because they don't care, they are inefficient or they don't have to. Whereas if someone can do it better we shouldn't just because we don't like a political dogma say we don't want this. Gov Shotts Unit

In total, a preoccupation with the idea of 'them and us' (the public and private sectors) and the significance of an homogenous, cohesive, disciplinary

group proves to be the root determinant for the dismissal of privatisation as an effective measure for the management of prisons today:

Staff...would be at risk because you wouldn't have enough staffing. There would be a danger of making a lot of people less security conscious because we will just use a camera to monitor everything using one man, you can't do that because you need the physical banter etc.. That is the basic security you have in any job, talking to one another. I think that would be - I mean our biggest costs in prisons is wages. To save a lot of money quickly is to sack staff and it wouldn't be the right way to do it. Gov1 Peterhead

So far, I have examined the various explanations for the existence of a crisis in the prison system. I have argued that administrative explanations are themselves too rigid and generalist in form and have subsequently endorsed the need to realise the role of the responsive individual and the implications his/her experiences and perceptions of the prison system, its culture and the 'other' group (prisoners and officers) have for the successful implementation of penal strategies. The role of effective communication channels for the enhancement of knowledge and maintenance of autonomy over the 'other' utilises this responsiveness of the individual and may be viewed as a means of 'managing the crisis' for the authorities - attempting to become more aware of the potential, opinions and views of the 'other', and striving to understand and measure up the 'other' more effectively and thereby absorb a sense of power from knowledge.

This has had important connotations for the manner in which the physical spaces in prison are used. With communication operating as the main factor in the development of 'Sentence Planning', the redesigning of the prison has become necessary, for the production of spaces where prisoners and staff can converse in private. Due to the nature of the social interaction occurring within these places (particularly the accumulation of knowledge of prisoners by staff), these spaces have served to represent arenas of confrontation. As a result of the implementation of 'Sentence Planning', new social spaces have emerged, with undesired meanings attached to them, contrary to the aims of the strategy.

Observation of the 'other' has thereby been extended to a more personal and communicative approach, one based around a need to listen. The implementation of a more trusting environment enhances the propensity of these communication channels, endorsing a more person-responsive approach to imprisonment. Such a shift has had important implications for the identity of the individual and the manner in which he/she requires and uses this knowledge of space, (its representation, meaning and use) and the 'other' (the characteristics and expectations of the individual prisoners according to stereotypes) to cope in prison. This is discussed in chapters VI and VII in terms of the manner in which prisoners within particular establishments deal with the spatial and social control strategies (outlined in chapters IV and V) directed at them by the authorities in both a passive (Chapter VI), and active (Chapter VII) manner.

It is necessary to recognise the extent to which such a shift in emphasis towards a more trusting environment has had important connotations for the maintenance of officers' own identities as 'disciplinarians' and 'custodians'. By the sheer nature of their job and the relative stresses they are placed under, the need to maintain a group identity for reasons of safety and security for the individual 'self' is paramount. They have had a limited need to endorse a personal identity on their role, as their autonomy is itself maintained through legislation and the power behind the uniform. The adoption of a more person-responsive approach to imprisonment has had important connotations for their role as custodians. Officers are no longer required to merely 'turn the lock and keep the key'. More and more they are being asked to become involved with prisoner problems - to identify with them on a personal level and advise them on suitable progressive routes through the system, which will prove to be of benefit to the prisoners themselves. In the following section, I emphasise that such a shift in roles has produced this 'crisis of legitimacy', where staff (and prisoners - see Chapter VI) are more and more required to re-address their approach and perceptions of the 'other' and re-establish themselves a new identity. It is to this which I will now turn.

### Shifts in ideology - a crisis of legitimacy?

This sub-conscious adoption of the group identity for reasons of safety has significant implications for the organisation and administration of the system as a whole. Staff are, and have always been, willing (through the POA) to assert their views in the prison system and to manipulate its order through the wholehearted adoption of stereotypical roles as custodians and identification as an homogenous group with an 'us' role. The challenge posed to this identity by privatisation, 'Sentence Planning' and a distinct shift in the requirements of the prison officer towards a more interactive and accountable role as semi-counsellors to prisoners, has had obvious implications for officers' perceptions as to whether control over prisoners has been thoroughly maintained. The provision of information and knowledge for officers and from officers to prisoners through the use of efficient language and communication has proven to be inadequate and as will become clear, has provided the basis for this 'crisis of legitimacy'.

It has been suggested throughout the chapter how identification with, and perception of, the successful containment and control of prisoners by staff has proven to be a significant determinant of the manner in which staff and prisoners adopt specific stereotypical roles in prison. These individuals identify themselves as operating within a particular social group (prisoner or staff) through communication, past experience, a sense of control, and as will be ascertained in later chapters, as a method of survival. It is within these social groups that certain pre-determined values, based on the need for the maintenance of an identity and past experiences in dealing with the 'other', are re-asserted through time and space, which themselves re-produce the stereotypical images of the prisoner and the officer.

However, such images should not be viewed as over-arching determinants of the manner in which staff and prisoners behave. Such structuralist approaches suggest that the identification with the homogenous group, existing within a daily regime and accountable to a strict hierarchical order, eradicates the power and persuasiveness of the individual. It has already been indicated how individuals are capable of expressing their own viewpoints contrary to the roles they are deemed to adopt, this having important



consequences for the levels of autonomy experienced by either group. Feelings of insecurity expressed by officers over the social roles they are expected to adopt in prison, have originated from the major shifts towards ideas of the 'normalised' environment and the idea of the 'responsible' prisoner. This is particularly evident with regard to the level of training and communication officers feel they have not received. Staff are more and more requested to act as counsellors within the 'Sentence Planning' scheme and to adopt a more caring attitude:

It's changing all the time. It's getting more towards the caring social worker. A few years ago we were just turn-keys but now we are more involved with prisoners. We could always do with more training though. PO4 Peterhead

We'll have to apply ourselves more and get involved. PO4 Shotts

I think again going back to security and control, and also the welfare of the prisoners; they have exactly the same problems in a lot of cases that we have, if not more. They have got families outside the same as we have so we have to be aware that they, although they have done something wrong have got a lot of responsibilities the same as we have and at the end of the day they are human beings the same as us, so a lot of the problems have got to be related. If we can realise that, we can solve very little of their problems because of the little time we see them, but we have got to be aware of their problems so that if something does come up, we have got to be aware of the problems of the prisoner. You have to maintain control and security and you are depriving the prisoner of his liberty so the security side of it has got to be high up there, very high up there. PO3 Perth

It depends on the prisoners' attitude and the officers' attitude. I know myself you get some prisoners who you can talk to whilst some just don't want to know. I don't want to take on the social worker role too much. We don't have the time as we have other things to do. We have social workers in here for that. They don't really interact with all the staff, just the two on the board. They do approach us if there is a problem with a particular prisoner. PO3 Peterhead

Many officers however express optimism over this shift from 'turnkey' to personal officer and social worker:

A mother, a social worker, a shoulder to cry on, everything that social services provide. I agree with that rather than being a turnkey. PO2 Shotts Unit

Yes. We have to get more involved in them. Its not like you open a door and shut a door and show no interest in them. We get involved more and more in the running of the place. Personal Officers should know, if there are five inmates, he should know all about those five inmates, personal problems or family problems, any problems at all and be able to talk through it. PO2 Castle Huntly

We can deal with a lot of prisoners' problems whereas before it was handled by social workers. PO1 Perth

I think there is a lot of caring involved today. We have to keep them in custody and as humanely as possible. PO5 Peterhead

Very much like it is in the unit now. Having more time to talk to prisoners and to take responsibility for them. We have little use for social workers in here. Staff can do a lot of that job. We are becoming very much like facilitators. PO3 Shotts Unit

You have a lot of titles. Sometimes you don't get the opportunity to do what you are paid to do. Mostly in Barlinnie it was a case of shutting doors, letting people out to the toilet and feeding people. There was very little contact with the families or their problems. Here you do get involved. I get more opportunities to expand my job in here. PO1 Shotts Unit

With a lot of them it is confrontation all the time, I know really that they are not like that, it's getting there and that is the problem, just getting there, and sometimes if you do talk to them they are quite normal sort of people you know, they will talk and speak away and what happened last night, whatever it is, they might be talking about some of their problems they have at home, but as soon as the other chaps come the guard is up, because they might be thinking I am this or that, so there is this big facade. PO5 Castle Huntly

The older members of staff are particularly critical of a more personalised system and favour a greater degree of discipline for prisoners associated with a restriction of information to them:

Control within the prison is still necessary. The first aim is to keep the prisoners secure and stop them from escaping. That is the basic side. A lot of the new stuff, the humanity and that, we should be treating

people like that anyway. I would like to think I have always done that even before this come in. PO4 Shotts Unit

The way things are going they are turning bloody prison officers into nannies...all the running about they do after them. PO4 Castle Huntly

It is evident how officers' experiences of disturbances in the system are attributed by longer serving members of staff to deficient discipline and regime schedules. Staff emphasise how a shift towards a less restrictive regime, where the removal of privileges as punishment rather than the segregation of prisoners will simply encourage further disorder. Older members of staff are unwilling to challenge or change their perceptions of prisoners. Their experience and knowledge of the 'other' is in their minds correct. Prisoners, they believe, require strict discipline:

They don't get punished here. It's a joke, they miss 'Top of the Pops' for a night, who worries about that, or they have to go to bed 1/2 hour before the rest of them. PO1 Castle Huntly

Punishment needs to be more consistent here. Not, "You will not see 'Top of the Pops' for three weeks - you will sweep the floor during your tea break". PO4 Castle Huntly

I don't see it as a form of punishment. I see it as a form of segregation for control, because you are taking this person away from an environment where he is being disruptive. Gov2 Perth

Remission is quite effective if it is for a short-termer, but if you are doing 20 years or something with remission, they are not bothered. Once they get nearer their end of sentence, they can see a date for getting out and that's when remission affects them. PO4 Perth

I don't know whether it works on the prisoner, but it works on the prison if you take them out of circulation. The prison will run better. PO3 Peterhead

Staff are sceptical of the implementation of a more psychological form of punishment rather than a physical display of coercion and as such are unable to fully legitimate or identify with their own social roles as custodians. This is not merely a response to deficient material or administrative factors, but one based upon the moral reactions of staff. Inadequate resources in terms of staff numbers and the quality of buildings in which to detain prisoners must not

be perceived (as will be established in Chapter VI) as a direct cause of 'crisis' within the system. It is, as Cavadino and Dignan (1993) state:

the "moral reactions of people.....(In sociological jargon, the effects of the material conditions) are 'mediated' through the subjective perceptions of human actors which are structured by ideology" (p.30).

It is the ideas that people have about punishment (particularly in relation to the meanings staff and prisoners attach to their own roles and identify with themselves), which structures the development and operation of the system. *The shift in ideology associated with the implementation of 'Sentence Planning' towards the identification of the responsible prisoner has proven to act as a catalyst for the reassertion of subjective individuality and a splintering of group identity.* This has important implications for the crisis situation in prisons. The need to become more involved in prisoner problems has required a shift towards a more personalised approach by officers. They are no longer required to face the 'other' as a group of custodians. The implementation of the 'Personal Officer Scheme' has reasserted the need for them to listen and absorb information not only as a method of control but in order to help the prisoner progress through the system, helping him/her to take advantage of all that which the system offers. The ability of the individual officer to identify with this role becomes paramount. More is required of their jobs, coupled with an express need to reassess officers' perceptions of themselves and prisoners, to re-evaluate their own experiences and knowledge of the 'other' and to re-legitimate their roles as custodians.

Prisoners have experienced similar feelings of the need for re-identification with their social role during a transient ideological period in which they are perceived by the authorities as different to how they perceive they are actually viewed. The provision of better facilities, less restrictive regimes, the introduction of the 'responsible' prisoner and an overall more personalised approach has prompted a mixed reaction. Some are optimistic about the changes:

I am a great believer in 'Sentence Planning'. In fact I do a wee talk to new incomers on 'Sentence Planning' to simply tell them to look at the 'Sentence Planning' programme. In prison there is a tremendous tendency to fall on peer pressure. "What do you think of this". "It's

rotten", therefore everyone takes the viewpoint that it is rotten. There is a closed mind, I am talking about the prisoners' side; so I actually think that 'Sentence-Planning' is in its embryonic stages but it is a good thing and I think it should be developed, and I think that surrounding that, that the targets - the objects of keeping people in prison - need to be examined more closely. There are a lot of guys come in here who with a bit of help would not re-offend but they do not get that help. Their horizons are narrowed. Somebody somewhere - if I can see it other people can surely see it. P3 Perth

Many others tend to view the changes with scepticism and as a form of tokenism, particularly in relation to 'Sentence Planning':

Personally I don't think prisoners want 'Sentence Planning'. All they want is just to get through their sentence. Like tell them "get up" "work" "go to bed" and I think they are quite happy with that. PO4 Castle Huntly

In here, 'Sentence Planning' collapsed. It did collapse. When it first started in Perth prison there were ten of us came up from Barlinnie. We were the first batch to go through it and what we were told in 'Sentence Planning' was like we had to do certain things. You had to stay in D hall for a minimum of three months before you progressed through to A hall; then you had to do a minimum so long in there and all this carry on; progress through 'chase the carrot' again. I was in D hall four weeks and two of us came up together. I know this boy from a long way back. We were asked right of the blue one night to move through to A hall and we were meant to stay there for three months. They said "Never mind about 'Sentence Planning' if you want to move". That was after just four weeks! P1 Perth

Well they are supposed to - sounds good - there is no such thing as a 'Sentence Planning'. There is a Lifer Section down in Calton Place, now they could plan your sentence for you. They could turn around and tell you what they are going to do, and they could look into your background to see what you want. Like the blokes in here who are electricians, painters, engineers, all doing life sentences. They could ask them if they want to go back to their trade, like saying you were a T.V engineer. Well technology moves on, and you would need a refresher course. Well they don't cater for these things. They put you out on TFF there. This is supposed to install the work ethic and they have you delivering gas things or cleaning up or doing somebody's garden or whatever. It's no use to you. Unless it is all rhetoric, they have been doing that for years. Originally it was to install the principle of going to work, into these horrible people, and then they will go out and work. But now they are realising that people are unemployed, so there



is not a lot of point. I think if they are going to be serious, they have got to try and train people to do other things. There is education in here but what do you learn across there? It's not going to get you a job. Whereas, if you had a trade or whatever you could catch up. They don't treat people individually. P5 Perth

It's just sitting in a room for two weeks. P3 Castle Huntly

This carry-on, 'Sentence-Planning', pick your own job, where you want to work, what you want to do through your sentence and they tell you "Yes you have done alright, but the allocation is not open to you just now" or you need to be such and such a stage before you can do that, or you will need to wait six or seven months before you can do that and all this. There are so many but's and if's. P1 Castle Huntly

It might be a good idea for other guys. They have your sentences (those doing life) planned already. That is it and so 'Sentence Planning' is nonsense. P5 Shotts Unit

It's designed and directed at everybody. At those who want to learn and who don't. They try to aim it down the middle and it can't work because of the mix of prisoners. P4 Shotts Unit

I haven't experienced it here. It is meant to start in C hall and that is why I applied to go there. It has no scope here because they won't introduce TFF or Home Leaves. There are no privileges. I'm willing to go and do it. I need to because you can behave yourself as much as you like and still get knocked back for parole or only get 6 months. P5 Peterhead

It's just starting up here. It's rubbish. What is the use of sentence planning if they don't have TFF for lifers. And there is no where you can move to anyway. They are talking through a hole in their heads. They are waiting for C hall to open up for 'Sentence Planning' to start and once that is open there will be about 60 guys on it. P2 Peterhead

As McCleery (1960) states:

"change challenges the informal power structure of inmate society" (p.76).

The provision of better facilities and an environment which encourages more relaxed relationships between staff and prisoners, directly confronts the prison subculture, reasserting a need for new and different prisoner hierarchies. *More open communication affects the channels through which*

*information flows and subsequently restructures the prison subculture in relation to 'knowledge' and the development of more open and constructive relations between staff and prisoners, rather than 'secrecy' and a more restrictive social environment. Prisoners are now provided with what may be perceived a confidential opportunity to take account for their actions and to serve their sentence in the way they choose. In doing so they are not only providing staff with a more personalised insight to their self and thereby acting as facilitators to their custodians, but are furthermore challenging their own identity and stereotypical roles through self-assertion and endeavouring to attain more privileges. The existence of the prisoner group, and recognition of the unification of individual prisoners as a group by staff is thus being affected by encouraging prisoners to personally strive for control over their own lives and sentences. As a result of this shift taking place, prisoners are no longer concerned with what they do not possess, but with what they possibly can possess.*

It is apparent the extent to which the transition to a new ideology as introduced by 'Sentence Planning' and the accordant problems in communication amongst different levels of staff and between staff and prisoners has produced an environment where prisoners are aware of staff's perceived reduction in control over them and the spaces in which they live:

I don't think that some of the officers are too sure about it, you know? They're trying to be more...approachable because of the Personal Officer scheme, but I think they're not sure about it and what it offers. My Personal Officer can't answer any of my questions about moving prison, because there's nowhere to go and he doesn't know what's happening. P3 Perth

This has served to produce an obvious degree of scepticism amongst prisoners, supporting the claim by McCleery (1960) that "the pattern of communication in a social system may be considered a functional equivalent of power and a necessary supplement to force in the maintenance of a stable system of authority" (p.77).

In essence, a perceived reduction in control amongst staff indicates an increased perception of power amongst prisoners. Equilibrium is only attainable with the assertion of a morally justifiable ideological approach and in the case of Scotland, such an approach is suffering from a lack of material

and administrative support in terms of a lack of effective communication and training throughout the system. This has resulted not only in a lack of confidence in the system and scepticism over its security, but more importantly, a perceived shift of power from officers to prisoners. Inadequacies of the system and the need for training has prompted a re-launch of the 'Sentence Planning' programme in June 1995 and the reassertion of its aims and provisions.

## **Conclusions**

Throughout this chapter I have attempted to examine the type of 'crisis' the prison system finds itself in. In my analysis I have emphasised the need to re-evaluate the role of administrative factors as issues related to the 'crisis' rather than as causes in themselves. In doing so, I have emphasised the relevance of the role of the individual prisoner within the prison system. The need to recognise the prisoners and officers as active recipients of the prison culture, where they themselves shape and reproduce this culture, becomes paramount. By highlighting the abilities of prisoners to interpret situations and act accordingly, thereby shaping the essence of imprisonment itself, I have accentuated the relevance of an individual's powers of perception and experience on the development of the system and social relations within particular establishments. As established in Chapter IV, the material age, design of and authority within, particular establishments are media through which the relations between prisoners and officers (and their personal experiences and perceptions of each other) can develop through effective communication channels. The opportunity is thus available for a greater degree of understanding between officers and prisoners and an equal sense of power between the two groups. It is clear how this autonomy and striving for power is therefore endorsed spatially. Prisoners and officers attach meanings to the spaces in which they exist together, as extensions of their stereotypes and need for identity and therefore as physical displays of psychological autonomy. Experience through time and space reproduces this stereotypical behaviour and whilst producing control over one's life, forms the basis of a coping mechanism to counter fear and insecurity. The need for safety and a personally perceived stress-free environment is paramount. It is the communication of this experience and need for safety through the

homogenous groups and social relations within these groups which sustains these roles and group identities.

The shift towards a more privilege-based regime and 'normalised' environment through the implementation of the progressive strategy, 'Sentence Planning' is essentially incongruous with prisoners' and prison officers' past experiences and perceptions of the 'other'. A readjustment of the identities and roles of prisoners and officers has occurred, where the change to a more responsive system has challenged the informal and formal power structures within the prisons. Officers are unable to legitimate their new statuses in this form, particularly in terms of the lack of resources available to implement these initiatives. The extension of the prisoners' abilities (through endorsement of the prisoner as a 'responsible' individual) is the outcome of a new moral code in prisons. The strategy exists as a new, social and spatial control mechanism.

The aim of this new person-responsive strategy is an attempt to challenge the need for such enclosed and protected 'niches', as described in depth in Chapter VII, in which individuals choose to exist. It entices prisoners to disclose more information about themselves as individuals and provides them with a long-term view of their sentence based upon progression through the system (or the macro-environment of the prison), rather than the short-term micro-environmental tactics they have become so used to adopting.

Such an approach to imprisonment has experienced obvious problems in terms of the prison subculture and the inherent mistrust between staff and prisoners. In recent times, the 'Sentence Planning' strategy has had a major impact upon the expected and actual experiences of each group and their perceived need to create social and spatial identities. Relationships between individual staff and prisoners have suffered. Prisoners adopt a group-oriented view of the inadequacies of the system by focusing in on their present conditions of containment and the internal spaces of their particular prisons, rather than adopting a long-term attitude to the facilities available to plan their own sentences individually. This has proved to be contrary to the initial aims of the 'Sentence Planning' strategy, a consequence being a

reassertion of the old 'knowledges' of the 'other' and the resultant socio-spatial impacts of the past.

As a result of inadequate resources however, and a need for more informed training of staff, this has produced an opposite reaction where prisoners are loathe to trust officers. This perceived lack in confidence of such a shift is due, not only to a material crisis (in relation to the communication tools available for the implementation of this new, moral code), but an ideological crisis where the identification of an individual's role within the system has, as a consequence, been forced to change. Thus, the past personal experiences of individuals are challenged and perceptions of both prisoners and officers ignored (as individuals and as part of two identifiable divergent social groups). These two incongruities between past and present and necessity of the maintenance of an identification with the stereotypical 'prisoner' and 'officer' roles, serves to highlight the significance and importance of the experiences and perceptions of individuals. More importantly it becomes apparent the need to understand the *responsiveness* of the 'other' rather than just the *production* of the 'other', within particular times and spaces. In accessing the views and meanings attached by either group to the physical, social and symbolic spaces of the prison, will help legitimate the new moral code necessary to produce a positive reaction to this approach. By appreciating the real significance of the past, it is possible to gain a clearer understanding of the intricacies of the prison culture of the present, as well as the manner in which it operates both socially and spatially and the ways in which prisoners and officers manipulate the culture both passively and actively in order to survive.



## CHAPTER VI

### *Personal Space I*

The aim of this chapter is to examine further the perceived 'crisis of legitimisation' within the prison system. It will attempt to establish the role of human agency (and therefore actions of the individual) in determining the implementation of policy. It will explore the manipulation of these policies through social and spatial manoeuvres at the prison system's frontier (in the establishments). It will argue that prisoners (in particular) and officers (as already emphasised in Chapter V), are not 'passive recipients' (Goffman: 1968) of an authoritarian system, but are responsive, active individuals whose actions result from personal perceptions and experiences and a need to feel safe and to create a safe environment in which to exist. A desire for knowledge in order to maintain this safety becomes paramount as a way of instigating control over an individual's personal time and space. This knowledge is also used to determine when and how prisoners and officers feel secure in acting as 'themselves' and developing their own identities as individuals, and when they feel the need to adopt stereotypical roles as a means to protect their own personal identities when encountering the 'other', thereby remaining 'unknown' and more in control of their lives.

In Chapter II it was established that the prison system in Scotland as well as in England and Wales is suffering from disparities between policy and practice. These engender a 'crises-oriented' system. Here, space is manipulated by the authorities through the implementation of strategies, policies and administration, temporarily to counter and alleviate these problems. As established in Chapter V, such an approach has actually managed to reproduce a form of 'crisis' in the system: from the need to legitimate status and social roles within the prison system, the authorities have adopted the 'Sentence Planning' scheme as a means of asserting the individual prisoner as a responsible and able human being, capable of opinions and interpretations with his/her own feelings and experiences. In doing so, I propose that this has reproduced a 'crisis of identity' - forcing prisoners and prison officers to reassess their own social roles, personal

identities and opinions of the 'other' and adopt fresh approaches to their social relations, existence and survival.

Prisoners and officers are thereby being required to legitimate their social and moral positions and repackage them in a new trusting and considerate manner. As emphasised in the previous chapter, 'Sentence Planning' may be viewed as an attempt to utilise the propensity of individuals and their personal capabilities to manipulate social and spatial networks within the prison. By improving communication networks and re-aligning the prisoner/prison officer power relations, the authorities are attempting to maintain a greater degree of control over prisoners and the prison spaces in which these prisoners live. The scheme utilises the capabilities of the individual to build a 'life' (both socially and spatially) according to his/her own perceptions and experiences of and meanings attached to prison space. This is despite the lack of financial resources and prisoner spaces to back up the scheme and the resultant need for legitimation of the 'self' emanating from this fragmentation of identity and assertion of the individual within a system (which has always associated control with the dispossession of role and identity of prisoners). I will show how these personal and stereotypical identities are actually adopted by prisoners as a means of survival and as a way to reassert personal identity within particular safe and often private spaces in the prison. Prisoners therefore manipulate the control and management ethic of the authorities (who attempt to utilise space themselves to their own security requirements).

I intend to study the survival and manipulatory tactics of prisoners in both this chapter and Chapter VII. In Chapter VII I focus specifically on these techniques and the manner in which prisoners actively seek to carve out non-institutional identities. In this chapter, I concentrate on the actual 'lived' spaces of the prison by prisoners and outline the more passive prisoner experiences of/ reactions to everyday prison life and spaces in which they live at a particular time. In doing so, I emphasise the degree to which prisoners' interpretations of prison life and the manner in which prison space is used, are very much different and in direct contrast to those of the staff in prisons. For prisoners, space in prison exists as a medium through which they ultimately 'survive' the prison experience and maintain an identity as an

individual. For staff, space in prison is used as a medium through which they carry out their roles as custodians, using it and manipulating it as a means to control prisoners. This chapter is essentially a snapshot account of prisoners' interpretations and experiences of prison life, in terms of the associated 'crisis of legitimation' (the need for identity in prison) and attempts by the authorities to solve this crisis through the implementation of both social (discipline and routine) and spatial (segregation and regime) control mechanisms (and thereby stem attempts by prisoners to assert identity and status and manipulate the system to their own needs).

In making these readings, the value of a pluralist approach (as discussed by Cavadino and Dignan (1991)) is necessary: accounting for the role of both material factors and administrative factors. I will emphasise how these factors are influential in the production of a crisis-oriented approach, particularly in relation to those individuals experiencing and operating within them. Cavadino and Dignan (1991) endorse an idea where:

"the effects of the objective material conditions are mediated through the subjective perceptions of human actors which are structured by ideology" (p.30).

The authors imply a need to produce a theoretical framework that is appreciative of both the inputs and outputs of the human element. I will argue for the importance of the perceptions of human actors, viewing them as individuals with their own powers of interpretation and personal experience within the cultural framework of the prison. Any approach to penalty needs to emphasise how subjective such actions are in relation to the role-playing of both staff and prisoners and their interpretation of situations. This is of particular relevance concerning the utilisation of these roles by the individual, and more importantly, the degree of experience an individual possesses within the system.

Such inputs, represented through the interview transcripts in meaning, language and attitude (and as already established in Chapter V), exist as important representations of prisoners' endeavours to gain control over physical, social and symbolic spaces in prison. I will emphasise how such power is related to an individual's needs and aspirations as part of a

community or family outside the prison, and as a member of the prison community with its associated stereotypes of 'deviant' (prisoner) and 'screw' (officer). It is important to appreciate where this striving for control originates - it is not merely adopted as part and parcel of an individual's role as prisoner or officer as so many texts tend to indicate, but is a direct outcome of an individual's interpretation, experience and perception of their own situation at that time. It is one that may be viewed in terms of the degree of *legitimacy* an individual can relate to his or her position as an 'offender' or 'gate-keeper' within society at large, and which is subsequently reliant upon the "moral reactions of people within and outside the penal system to the material situation" (Cavadino and Dignan 1991, p.30).

As Cavadino and Dignan explain, this 'moral outrage' and 'crisis of legitimacy' has been partially demonstrated through rioting (the 1980s - Shotts, Peterhead prisons). Media coverage of these demonstrations and the public's perceptions of the break-down in authority in prisons, through the destruction of the physical prison spaces by prisoners, has produced an environmentally-based explanation to these outbursts - one that perceives the 'quality' of the prison spaces to be the cause of prisoner unrest. Such a reaction has been required in order to justify to the public why these disruptions occurred, under what was originally perceived to be a strict and disciplined prison regime. However, it is evident that these outbursts are not merely provoked by material factors. The system is not dealing with a 'material crisis' per se - if this had been the case, disruption within prisons would have become a regular, historical norm and one that would most obviously manifest itself in the older and more dilapidated institutions. This is not the case in Scotland, where disruptions have occurred in prisons such as Peterhead and Shotts where some of the newest facilities are available.

I will suggest that such a 'crisis of legitimacy' is not based upon the actual state and condition of the spaces of the prison, but upon the symbolic meanings these spaces represent to both prisoners and officers, segregated by these boundaries from wider society. Prisoners' perceptions and, more importantly, roles are very much dictated by their own interpretation of how they, as human beings, are viewed by society - as 'deviants' - and the accompanying perceived social need to segregate them from their

communities and families as retribution for their behaviour. Evidence from this study reveals that prisoners believe a moral injustice is being done to them. By keeping prisoners within these boundaries, officers are perceived by prisoners as representatives of society, maintaining control and security through discipline, thereby constantly re-asserting prisoners' 'deviant' status and inadvertently creating and recreating a 'them and us' situation within a confined space. The injustice of the penal system and its disciplinarian labelling mechanism is located within the prisons. Prisoners react to more stereotypical interpretations spatially as a way of re-adjusting the sense of injustice they perceive they are being served. Such reactions are localised spatially as a means of acquiring power and control for prisoners. This has particular implications for the use of space in particular establishments by the authorities, as a form of control. In essence, this striving for legitimacy by prisoners serves to manipulate the utilisation of spaces within the prison and subsequently attaches new meanings to these spaces, as mechanisms of the struggle for power between staff and prisoners.

It is evident how any approach to understanding the current prison 'crisis' must therefore take into account the 'moral beliefs' of prisoners and staff. This is not only in relation to the use of the material spaces of the prison, and organisation of these spaces (administrative factors), but also to the meanings attached to these spaces by both groups as a method of asserting power and re-establishing a sense of cohesion and power as a group, and worthiness as individuals unto themselves. This is true for both prisoners and staff. Each group reacts to stereotypical influences and peer pressure. However, it is also important to emphasise that these groups are dependent upon their own interpretations and experiences as individuals within wider society. The individuals who make up these groups are subsequently not merely 'actors' in role-plays, but must be viewed as capable of perceiving situations as individuals with their own sense of duty and responsibility, belonging to spaces outside the prison. In order to emphasise the extent to which prisons in Scotland are suffering from a "crisis of legitimacy", it is necessary to appreciate the material and administrative factors which form the basis of this crisis.



## Prison crisis - material factors

As was evident in Chapter IV, Scottish prisons date from the mid nineteenth century, with the existing buildings still in use. This poses obvious problems for the intended use of prison space at the time of construction and the actual use of the building now. Prisons such as Perth and Peterhead were designed and constructed at a time considerate of the separatist regime (see Chapter IV), one that enforced control through non-communication and hard work. When these regimes were abandoned and new objectives were promoted, reliant upon "socialisation and activity as ways of dealing with inmates" (Ditchfield: 1990, p.79), the architecture of the past proved restrictive to the purposes of normalising the prison environment of the present and encouraging staff/inmate interaction. Facilities such as sanitation, recreation, dining have all emerged as "issues" simply due to the fact that the design of the spaces allocated for such activities cannot be equated to the current aims of the prison system. My research revealed that, in many cases, the resources for recreation and dining are made available but that the structure, design and spaces of the prison restrict their effective use:

Everyone uses the Gym. It is rather small. It only takes 20 bodies at a time, depending on staff, maybe 22, but it is not a lot out of over 400.  
P5 Perth

During the winter we are basically in the hall most of the time but allowed out for a couple of hours. Summer we are allowed three nights per week. We are allowed one hour exercise per day which I don't think is adequate. At night you can't go anywhere because there are no lights. We can't go from this hall to see someone in that hall. P4 Perth

Well I have been in prisons where they eat in their cells, eat in dining halls and it is more humane to see them in dining halls, but if you have problems the dining hall is a source of the problem. In the dining hall you maybe have a 100 prisoners in there and there is something wrong with the food this one day, you can have a riot because they just feed off each other, so for control purposes it is better eating in their cells.  
Gov 5 Perth

It's like the old triangle again. If you get the bottom level right, like basic sanitation, basic cleanliness, you are getting fed well, your clothing is right, if you start with that then you can build up and get luxuries, so I think we are needing to get that done first. Give them sanitation in their cell. PO4 Perth

Facilities are very limited. Guys in the bottom flat try to listen to one station on the T.V and in the 2nd flat they're playing pool and in the 3rd flat they're listening to another channel and in the 4th they're playing computer games. P5 Peterhead

I prefer to dine in a hall and have a laugh with the guys. I think it would be more relaxed if we dined together. P3 Peterhead

In new prisons everyone has everything laid out. But here, workshops are many metres away from the accommodation area. Gov2 Peterhead

Our recreation could be attached to the halls like 'C' hall. The other halls have to be escorted out of the halls to recreation. 'C' hall remain in one unit and develop a small community and a wee bit of trust. PO2 Peterhead

This mismatch of design and regime is not only evident within the older prisons. Castle Huntly, Shotts Unit, Shotts and Cornton Vale prisons all provide more recent examples of how architecture can be debilitating to the management of the regime and therefore, overall control. This 'mismatch' has occurred, not only in terms of changing ideologies towards a more trusting and normalised environment, but also a lack of insight in the actual design of and layout of the institution:

The toilet doors are only half doors. In Papa block it seems silly. They trust you in being in a privileged block and yet still feel the need to watch you pee! P3 Cornton Vale

The design is adequate but observation and safety wise we can't see the officer up the stair. Observation is very important for safety not so much security. We have to 'phone one another. PO1 Cornton Vale

Perhaps our administration, visits and medical visits aren't located as well as they should be. Prisoners have to walk 350 yards from visits to the accommodation blocks. It does cause its problems. Layout would have been enhanced if these areas were closer. Gov 2 Shotts Prison

The design of the prison doesn't lend itself to the best security. The accommodation blocks are at one end and the working environment in the centre. There's also a great distance from the administration blocks to the accommodation blocks. The corridors were designed wide with few windows and low ceilings. It's new and it's shocking. The corridor faces onto workshops and so you can't knock out windows as it increases observation for prisoners. Flat roofs have problems of their

own and why we build them I don't know especially with so much rain here. The sections in the accommodation blocks are dead ends with or without Grill Gates. Prison officers can be trapped and it's a psychological trap for staff. Gov 2 Shotts Prison

This prison is very badly organised for seeing around the corners for the sections. It would have been better to have built it like Perth where the officer can look down the section and see the whole thing. Here they can't do it. They can't see into the toilets where anything can be happening. PO2 Castle Huntly

You have two split buildings on different physical levels. We are up on the rock as it were and your accommodation building and main business is carried on downstairs at the bottom. Gov 2 Castle Huntly

- **The material confines of the prison**

The evidence above reveals that the success of prison design and the utilisation of space for control and pursuit of long-term goals by the system, is very much reliant upon the type of offender detained. This is not only in relation to the number of offenders and their crimes committed (and perceived threat to the public and staff), or the 'toxic mix' of prisoners detained in the prisons, but also in terms of the manner in which different groups of prisoners (as well as staff) perceive the spaces they use and what these spaces actually represent to them. In all the establishments it was emphasised that the design and resultant security of the establishment was very much reliant upon the type and behaviour of prisoners detained and expectations of this behaviour in terms of the prisoner stereotype. In Cornton Vale it was emphasised how the layout of the prison only remained secure because of the fact that it confined female prisoners who, from experience, perception and expectation (related to females being viewed as the 'less violent sex') were unlikely to cause too much physical damage or attempt to escape:

If we had more dangerous prisoners we'd have to have higher staffing levels because of the inadequate design. In male prisons this design just wouldn't work. PO4 Cornton Vale

Such an 'insecure' perception of this particular layout is however challenged. Shotts Prison, (housing some of 'Scotland's Toughest') is designed in a similar

manner, in sections or corridors with cells leading off either side and a 'grill-gate' at the end. Concerns were aired in Shotts over its 'inadequate' design but staff on the whole felt relatively safe:

There's no real problem here. Officers just have to be aware of what is going on around them. We can always lock-down if we have to and separate ourselves from the prisoners completely. PO3 Shotts

What it is necessary to emphasise is how relevant the category of 'prisoner' is, in terms of officers' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the layout of particular establishments by officers within these establishments. In Castle Huntly, the inadequacies of this prison's design rely on the fact that the establishment is a category 'D' prison with emphasis being on trust and an approach based on the 'responsible' young person:

The doors are not physically secure. You could kick the door in. It's not a strong door and it was never meant to be a strong door. Again we are back to the situation where they are meant to be Category 'D'. We are not expecting them to abscond or escape. Gov 1 Castle Huntly

A similar trust element is imposed in Shotts Unit:

The function of this Unit is working out a philosophy of trust and you can't just keep speaking about it. You have to practice it. I think it is a reasonably safe way of demonstrating trust by saying that there are areas of the unit where you can go where we won't be following you up. Gov 1 Shotts Unit

The wider literature ignores such interpretative signs, providing a positivist/materialist explanation ignorant of prisoners and staff as individuals with their own experiences and powers of interpretation. "Prison Crisis" by Peter Evans (1980) is an example, detailing the extent to which factors such as high prisoner populations, overcrowding and poor conditions serve to initiate disturbances. It is true that such factors are not mere fiction. Overcrowding is evident in Scotland, in the case of the remand units and local prisons such as Edinburgh and Perth. Of the prisons used in this study, none were suffering from overcrowding at the time that this fieldwork was carried out, each prisoner having his or her own cell. High population figures are however a definite problem for the future, with the prison population forecast to rise to 6,000 prisoners with only 4,800 places available. Such problems are

and will continue to be prevalent mainly in the local prisons such as Perth, due to the different categories of prisoners detained close to their local communities. In Perth therefore, a different form of insecurity arises from concern over the mixing of different sentences and types of offender:

Everything in prison is geared to security. The security I maintain the vast majority of people in here, over 80%, maybe 90% have no need of that security. They are not violent, they are not going to run away, so they are contained in circumstances that are not necessary. To recreate a prison like Perth for high category, high risk prisoners is necessary because Perth has got everything it needs. What is actually needed in my opinion is more prisons of the semi-open ....type where people are contained easily and are flexible within the system. In Perth here unless you go to the Gym or something like that you are contained within the hall, so what great fun you can have running about the gallery. It doesn't work. P3 Perth

Well, they have got to put this myth over here that everyone is dangerous, and we would all run away and we must keep this certain number of staff, must have all those wires and security. If they open the doors tomorrow and let everybody out they will go home. Everybody who escapes goes home; they catch them in their local pub or in his house watching the T.V or with his kids in the street. P5 Perth

The problem is you don't have enough cellular accommodation to do that. I mean most staff prefer single cells, because you are dealing with one prisoner and if you are dealing with like two prisoners, there is the problem of confrontation. C hall we have to double up and on occasion treble up which is not ideal, because if people are compacted together like that the result is tension rises and there are frustrations and either prisoner or officer is going to get hurt at some time, if there is overcrowding. Gov 4 Perth

However, what is evident is that this does not prove to be a major problem for most of the other prisoners interviewed. In all six case studies, the majority of prisoners seem to be concerned with "doing their bird" and getting out and back to their communities and their families. Gaining access to the external spaces of the prison (outside), in the fastest time possible, is more relevant to prisoners than issues relating to the spaces within the prison. In Cornton Vale this was related to a prisoner's need to know what was happening to their children and relationships:



Children and contact with them are the main worries. Concerns over adoption and fostering and family contact are paramount. PO3 Cornton Vale

It's hard for women. They're always having to ask others outside to look after their weans. The DSS picks it all up and pays the rent. PO1 Cornton Vale

The introduction of conjugal visits would be helpful. It's hard to keep relationships going for women when the man's out there and the main thing for him is sex. P3 Cornton Vale

Their children and husbands concern them. If their husband doesn't turn up for a visit and there's no 'phone call they worry. Money worries, housing. Some are worried about becoming too involved with drugs and getting pressurised to bring something in on their next outside visit. Gov1 Cornton Vale

Conditions are OK but my family comes first and working to get out of here. P4 Cornton Vale

I can cope with being locked up, the officers, the job. The hardest thing is being separated from my boys. P3 Cornton Vale

In the male establishments, prisoners are not concerned so much with how their children are being looked after. Their wives and girlfriends seem to be expected to look after them. Many of these prisoners expressed a need to get out away from the prison, to be with their family as a 'figure-head' as well as to keep out of trouble:

I feel really cut off from home. Being a person who was at the forefront of decision making as a manager I find it difficult. I keep myself to myself. P2 Shotts

I keep clear of anyone who looks like trouble. I keep my head down. P3 Shotts

I've lost a lot of money now because I had to sell out and have lost years of my family's life. It's made me more determined to get out. P3 Peterhead

Issues such as sanitation, population mix and overcrowding are of secondary importance to prisoners and very much dependent upon the category of prisoners (and therefore the physical and social spaces in which they are

maintained), their length of sentences (and time already spent in prison) and, more relevantly, their personal views and experiences of prison life. At Perth, problems relating to prison food and visiting conditions were raised:

They don't like dining halls, because, dining halls, like the grub is rubbish, and the dining hall is where there is likely to be some friction; you are liable to say, yuck.... it only takes one person to go up and say, "this is shite", and there is a few sheep follow, so that's why they don't like dining halls. P5 Perth

I mean lets face it you stay in your cell, you're eating in there and sleeping in there yourself, and the food prepared is awful, not hot or nothing. A lot of trouble is caused here because of the food. P1 Perth

You and I could be sitting having a visit. I could just move my hands anywhere at all, like to my mouth or anywhere and if they think there is anything suspicious, that is enough to get you done for six months and loss of remission. P1 Perth

Recreation facilities are crap. The recreation room is too claustrophobic; once you are in you can't get out. There should be a facility whereby if you don't like it you can go back to your cell. You've got to ask specially and go through another procedure to get out the door again, so I feel that should be changed. P4 Perth

The visits are comfortable enough but not the fashion in which they take place and the amount of time the people are allowed to spend with their families. If you are interested in maintaining a link with your family, you try and maintain a link with your family for one hour a week. P3 Perth

Well the cookhouse, it depends what the food is like, that is a problem, but what I find in prisons is, I'd like to see like if there is a problem with the food or the surgery, get somebody from the surgery or the cookhouse to deal with the problem. We just take the flack, they come up and shout and bawl at us and ask us if there is anything we can do about it and we have to say we can't. We are the man in the middle, so if they were actually talking to each other they could come to an agreement or solve the problem, because it seems stupid us being the third party arguing with both sides. PO4 Perth

I think dining areas are a controlled problem in the tradition of the way they used to run prisons, where all the prisoners went to the dining hall at the one time, they would be there for an hour. I'm not labelling all prisoners, but it doesn't take many difficult prisoners amongst them to create a situation, so from my own point of view at

this point in time I am saying if we kept to that system, I would prefer they were dining in their cell. If we moved to a system where we actually said to the prisoners, your dining time is between --- which is fairly radical, I suppose, and they had two hours where they could appear for dinner and could be treated as responsible people, then I wouldn't have much difficulty with that. Gov 4 Perth

Prisoners detained in Peterhead prison are incensed by the location of the prison:

I have two young children. Instead of taking 2 fortnightly visits I take 1 weekend visit. She is exhausted. Coach to Glasgow to Ayr to here. As soon as it starts snowing here I 'phone my wife and tell her not to bother. I just don't know what is going on sitting in the cell. P5 Peterhead

My wife has to book into accommodation when she visits. It's a lot of money. We've had to move house to Aberdeen to get closer. P3 Peterhead

Those prisoners detained at Castle Huntly and Cornton Vale Female Institution indicate how the prevalence of gangs and bullying are cause for concern. This psychological form of harassment has important connotations for the feelings of security within the prison, particularly when prisoners are out of sight of the staff and are more susceptible to being harassed. This attraction in gaining access to private and personal space in prison is therefore substantially diminished, as it is within these spaces that prisoners fear both the imposition of the authorities and their peers:

I don't like the dorms. Too much bullying goes on and you can't lock yourself away and get your space. Saying that some of them like dorms. But personally I don't like six people in one dorm. You always will have trouble. If you get six boys from Glasgow and one from Edinburgh there is going to be trouble for the Edinburgh boy. PO1 Castle Huntly

There is no place for a young offender who is under pressure to hide, because if he goes behind his door and people shout at him from his door and sometimes the unseen is more frightening to them than what they see. PO2 Castle Huntly

There is quite a lot of cat-calling, a lot of immature type of stuff, that could really be doing away with. PO5 Castle Huntly

The Glasgow guys tend to mix together and like from Lanarkshire and they mix together, it's like sort of clans but we do mix but if something happens like they go here and we go there. P2 Castle Huntly

Bullying is a fact of life in general but it is certainly more prevalent and I think it is more physical in under 21s than in adults, they are more subtle. It is more emotional psychological. We tend to have rivals outwith the prison situation, it is the Glasgow v the Edinburgh the Aberdeen v the Glasgow. Edinburgh v the Fife, that sort of situation. It's not anything to do with the blocks. The only time you have healthy rivalry and it is healthy rivalry, is in sport when there is good going rivalry between the blocks and they want to be top wing. Gov Castle Huntly

There's a lot of bitchiness. It's not always face to face but behind the back. It's always verbal here. PO3 Cornton Vale

A lot of the women know each other from outside and are involved in drugs. Problems are dealt with verbally between themselves. Gov 1 Cornton Vale

There's a lot of bitchiness in Yankee (Young Offenders) Block. People are always trying to prove themselves. P5 Cornton Vale

Lassies constantly create tension by arguing amongst themselves. P4 Cornton Vale

Everybody's problem here is listening to people complaining about the system, officers, petty things and what the system is doing to them. I get sick of that. P3 Cornton Vale

In the block it can become petty and bitchy and that does cause tension. because I have a strong personality no-one argues with you. Nobody asks me for anything because I'm not prepared to give. You and they know where they stand. P1 Cornton Vale

In all these cases it is evident how experience and interpretation of the regime within a specific prison by both staff and prisoners dictate the degree to which material factors within the prison contribute towards control. Prisoners' personal experiences and perceptions of the facilities available determine how they are used. But more importantly, the need to recognise the individual prisoner as possessing an identity attached to the spaces and people outside of the prison is paramount. As I have attempted to show using the above quotations from the different establishments, prisoners' personal,

physical and emotional needs can manipulate and shape the spaces and uses of these spaces in the prison. This evidence indicates a definite move away from the more orthodox accounts relating the production of a 'crisis' in prison to the mere existence of issues such as overcrowding, bad conditions and inferring causal relationships between them. Problems arise in different forms within individual establishments according to the perceptions, needs and experiences of individual prisoners and officers. As Cavadino and Dignan (1991) emphasise:

"One problem with the orthodox account is that it simply does not square with the facts about when and where riots happen - and in particular, whereabouts in the prison system they occur. If prison riots are caused by overcrowding, under-staffing, bad physical conditions and poor security, one would expect them to occur exclusively in the local prisons and remand centres which are the most overcrowded and understaffed, where conditions are worse and security less tight than in longer-stay establishments. Yet prior to the 1986 riots, major disorder was almost entirely confined to 'dispersal prisons' - prisons which house prisoners on long sentences and which are not overcrowded and understaffed, where conditions are relatively good, and where security is at a maximum." (p. 18)

And this is certainly true in Scotland. Peterhead and Perth have both experienced riots. Perth prison's 'D' hall rioted in 1992, prior to this study. In this case it was put down to the efficiency of the authorities in stemming the introduction of drugs to the prison through the searching of visitors by officers. In 1993, a major riot occurred in 'A' hall in Shotts prison, again related to a crack-down on drugs. This prison is the newest establishment in Scotland with in-cell sanitation, recreation and good visiting facilities. The environment in which prisoners are confined, were not viewed as being catalytic in the development of these outbursts. However, the actual use of space in prison to maintain and implement effective control (in this case a crack down in the hunt for drugs by the authorities), was raised as an explanation for these outbursts. It is evident therefore that prisoners are frustrated (sometimes physically), by the effectiveness with which staff attempt to restrict and control prisoners through a reassertion of control over the spaces of the prison.



However, mere dissatisfaction amongst prisoners and staff and their interpretation and perception emanating from their own experiences of prison life, relate to both material inadequacies, ideological incongruities within the system, in terms of the operation of the regime etc. and an individual's sense of moral injustice. These exist as constant elements of criticism. Although such a sense of injustice will never fully be abolished due to the nature of imprisonment and the manner in which it segregates and restricts individuals both spatially and socially, it is evident how prisoners' sense of moral 'injustice' forms the basis for reaction against the more tangible elements of the system, such as the regime and security. It is this constant underlying sense of injustice which feeds such outbursts. (It is also important to note that a disruption to the system - a physical and violent outburst within a particular establishment - does not necessarily have to take place to establish a 'crisis' actually exists).

All of this does not dispel the material and particularly the spatial element of the problem - it merely adds a new dimension to it - that of prison space as both a *physical* and *psychological* or 'material' and 'symbolic' barrier to prisoners and staff. Prison space is used not only as a facilitator to segregation and punishment, but as a tangible element at which blame can be directed both by prisoners (through disruption and a physical display of injustice) and administrators (through explanations of inadequate resources), as a way of 'explaining away' signs of moral injustice and responding to disruption. Prison space may thus be used to *precipitate* and *avert* crisis at the same time. It is towards this 'symbolic' nature of space in prison, that I now turn.

### **Prison Crisis - Symbolic dimensions**

At the ground level, the interpretation by staff and prisoners of the use of space within the prison is attached to displays of power. As will be revealed below, the beliefs, experiences and perceptions of both prisoners and staff facilitate this power 'trip'. These moral indignations are manifest *spatially* and have particular significance for issues of security and control. Canter (1975) emphasises how staff and prisoners perceive the spaces they live in in rather different ways, with staff viewing areas of the prison in relation to movement and control through the prison (thoroughfares for dispersal, areas for

congestion and areas for privacy); whilst prisoners tend to think of design in relation to places for group activities or personal activities and safety. In each case, the use of space in prison is identified according to the roles established by prisoners and officers in the prison, but more importantly, their needs and individual perceptions of these needs at particular times.

Past experience and fear are highlighted as perpetrators of these different interpretations for each group, space being used in both cases to avert fear and generate a feeling of safety, through a perceived increase in power and control over the spaces of the prison by the individual.

Canter's study is useful in identifying the mismatch between security and control and the difference in perceptions of security by both prisoners and staff. In my study, prisoners tended to be more concerned with the actual psychology behind the security restrictions and the way in which they feel 'labelled' as deviants and subsequently mistrusted:

It's tight, and it is getting worse. When I walk about the prison, I have to carry a wee book with me with a photograph inside the book and if certain officers don't know me they ask for it, just to prove who I am. Security is very tight. P1 Perth

Well it is a top security prison but I think they go a bit over the top regards their security, visits, the way they move prisoners about the prison. There is not enough emphasis on a prisoner being responsible for his own movements, to do and think for himself and I think that is wrong and they take that away from you because I believe that you are sent to prison to be kept off the street. All this propaganda that the public read through the media regarding trouble in prisons - that is a lot of rubbish. PO2 Perth

I think the counting is a bit over the top. There is no where you can disappear within one hundred yards. P3 Peterhead

Too many head counts in the backyard. It's childish. Strip searches are totally degrading and it maybe from staff you have been getting on well with. It causes problems. P4 Peterhead

It's a more structured regime than say at the Barlinnie Unit...but I can only compare this place to the mainstream...I've no other place I can compare it to, no? It's a hell of a lot better than the mainstream. Security in this place is OK...I can actually walk out at night and walk

round about the building inside the walls you know?...but er the actual structure of the place, there's a lot of shouting about guys in Barlinnie Special Unit who get in cell visits, where they can have a visitor and sit in their cell with them...you don't get that in Shotts Unit. P1 Shotts Unit

I think it is secure enough because you have the wall and the two fences and the cameras. It's tops. Where would you actually go to over that wall? It's enough. I'm not category 'A', so I'm not checked on. This is unusual though in my experience. When I had my niece in I was told to watch my time. But I think that was because I had a young lady in my cell. I brought it up at a special meeting and now officers don't approach the prisoners when they have visitors. Wait until they leave and then say don't let it happen again. Anybody else like from the department can come round and family should be allowed more often. P2 Shotts Unit

In Castle Huntly YOI, security is imposed as a form of psychological deterrent. Escaping from these open conditions results, on recapture, in confinement in the closed YOI at Polmont:

When I first came in there was a guy, and we were all in the dog boxes and he said I'll not be in here ten minutes, and the officer said "I tell you what if you do decide to run on me, you'll not get battered or hit or anything like that, you'll just go down the road and Dundee is that way, Perth is that way so on you go if you want. If they see you going they will chase you, you will just make it worse for yourself in the long run" and they will try and help you out if you want to tell them your problems. As far as I am concerned there isn't a fence up there. P1 Castle Huntly

Officers are more concerned with the physical forms of security (such as cameras and the physical thickness of the perimeter walls), as well as the manner in which prison design hinders its usefulness. In Castle Huntly, officers are particularly willing to air mistrust over the design of the prison, despite the types of prisoners being held (category 'D') and the use of more open conditions for these 'responsible' prisoners. Such mistrust reflects officers' own perceptions of how a prison establishment should be designed for the stereotypical 'deviant' in prison:

When I first started here, you locked them up and kept the key and that was all you did for an 8 1/2 hour shift. You never got involved with them or their problems, social problems. You knew them by

name and roughly where they came from sometimes but you never got attached to them. PO1 Castle Huntly

There are so many corners here. If you stand in a corner you can only see what is in front of you and you've got eight corridors off that corridor so just isn't right. You've got accommodation stuck at one end; the cookhouse is stuck at another end; the Gymnasium is stuck away at another corner. Everything seems to be stuck in corners, but that is just the way it is designed. Every jail I suppose will be the same - it is just where they have space. PO1 Castle Huntly

It was very hard for the staff to try and keep control of them, especially with open cells when you didn't know if there two or three in there and you couldn't get your numbers right and you had to go back in and check everybody, and things weren't being passed on. It could be disruptive because the bigger the crowd, the more likely there would be trouble. Each jail is the same, there is certain figure, a certain level when the hall runs smooth, but go over that level and the whole hall just seems to disintegrate round about you. PO3 Castle Huntly

In Shotts Unit, a purpose-built maximum security prison within a prison, security and design facilities are regarded by staff to be acceptable. The security of the perimeter of the prison measures up to and is perceived to adequately reflect the category of the prisoner detained within the unit. Staff seem to feel safe and at ease in this environment, despite an excellent quality and quantity of resources being available to prisoners who have in most cases committed violent and atrocious crimes (often including violent behaviour towards staff):

The layout is very good. It's a secure enough for these prisoners. For the prisoners perhaps not because when they look out the window all they see is fences. They find it claustrophobic. When you first come in here, it's very closed in. PO1 Shotts Unit

It's a lot easier to see a certain area at a glance within the main concourse. There is not really anywhere where people can hide. We don't have to go and search. We can see at a glance. Outside, the only thing visible is the football area. The rest of it is blind and I don't think it is thoroughly covered by cameras. Whereas the main jail is. It could be more secure. PO2 Shotts Unit

There always has to be a balance struck between security, order and the care and opportunity side, to pick up on our mission statement.

The two go hand in hand. You don't have good security and you don't have good control and order and you can't really get on with the job of providing care and opportunities. You have to try and get the balance right and I think that is what was attempted in this building.  
Gov Shotts Unit

The layout and design of the physical spaces of the prison is also viewed in relation to security provisions at Peterhead. Here the age of the establishment is perceived as important:

Security is important. There are no advantages because this jail was designed 100 odd years ago for a different type of prisoner. The beauty of Peterhead is that it is built of granite and it is indestructible as opposed to some of the modern jails built today where the prisoners can get through the walls with a knife. Structurally it is very sound. Our recreation could be attached to the halls like C Hall. The prisoners in the other halls have to be escorted out of the halls. C Hall has been able to remain in one unit and develop a small community and a wee bit of trust. This makes it more secure and controlled for both staff and the prisoner. PO2 Peterhead

The security and control we have here is quite good. We can keep an eye on everyone, in the halls etc. There aren't any wee corners or anything like that. There are some halls three and some with four flats. It's an old fashion prison and the walls are about four feet thick and so it is secure. And since the last winter, the roofs have been thickened as well. PO4 Peterhead

Here for example, because of the age of the prison, workshops are many miles away from the accommodation area. Inside it is all fairly claustrophobic and in terms of prison control some landings are very narrow so it makes it very difficult for staff to get around a bit because there is not a lot of room to pass other activities outside. That is where a lot of the trouble is, like hostage taking as has happened in here and in other prisons - because of the narrow corridors. Gov 2 Peterhead

It is important to emphasise that this study uncovers (as would be expected), a basic principle of difference in interpretation between prisoners and staff as to how space in prison is used and the divergence in opinion of this use. It is evident how the manipulation of prison space as a form of control by the authorities, exists as a debilitating factor in the development of more productive social relations between prisoners and staff (and therefore better management and control in prisons). The authorities perceive space in prison



as a means to assert more effective control over prisoners, whereas prisoners view these spaces on a more personal level as places where they have to essentially exist and survive safely. I intend to analyse the symbolic representations of prison space for both prisoners and staff in relation to the use of visiting, sanitation, dining and punishment facilities as a means of highlighting the divergence in opinion and interpretation between the two groups.

- **Visiting facilities**

The visiting area is a good example of where an ultimate divergence in views exists between prisoners and officers on how space is and should be used for the purpose of prisoners maintaining contact with families and friends. Prisoners are overtly concerned with the quality of the environment in which visits take place; particularly the degree of intrusion by the authorities, through observation and strip-searching and the quality of private time spent with visitors :

Visits were terrible to start with but they seem to be getting better. They were originally in the classrooms but now they've all been carpeted and there are budgies and fishtanks. They have got toys but it could be better. There are prison officers walking by and the cameras. I would like more privacy as there are people right next to you of visitors. There is no space between the tables. P2 Peterhead

They're not too bad. It's a bit more relaxed than Inverness was but again you can't chat because you are sitting quite close to one another. It's pretty bad. You can't say anything to the wife because there is a guy sitting right next to you, so you can't talk about any personal issue because it might get spread. If anything important now does crop up, the wife tells me in a letter. You can't talk of family problems. P2 Peterhead

Head counts are not even inconvenient. They can count me as many times as they like and it doesn't bother me. It does bother me when I go to sit with my family and there are two cameras focused on me and 6 members of staff watching me and my family and when it is finished they make me take all my clothes off. Every visit, every prisoner has a strip search. My girlfriend visits me from York three times year and the first time she came in here she was really intimidated by the attitudes of the staff and the amount of security. She thought I'd done something wrong because of all the security. It's intimidating for

visitors and they strip search us and they have never caught anyone once. If you are going to take something in you will swallow it. It's stupid and they know that but because that is the way it has always been done, it will continue. They are incapable of any original thought.  
P5 Peterhead

Staff however are more concerned with the practicalities of visits for the maintenance of control over prisoners and the infiltration of illegal substances into prison:

From an operation point of view I would say all visits closed. No open visits whatsoever, no contact whatsoever, but that is from a security and operations point of view. From a humane or a Governor's point of view the more open contact they have the better. The risk is something is going to be brought in and we know that, there is no way we can have a 100% drug-free jail if we allow open visits. You need the open visits because one of the dangers is that people being in prison for a long time can break down family relationships and we have got to encourage these. Now the only way to do it is open visits, telephones, letters, to keep contact with the family, so from a humane point of view its got to be open visits. We have no choice, but certainly from a security point of view, I would love all closed visits and it would make my job a lot easier. Gov 1 Peterhead

They will do anything to get drugs in - ask their girlfriends, use babies at visiting time, pressurise other prisoners. We will never stop it unless we are totally observant. PO2 Shotts

- **Sanitation**

Differences in opinion between the prisoners and officers as to the perceived need for the provision of better quality facilities in prisons are also apparent with regards to the issue of sanitation. Both staff and prisoners agree on the need to end 'slopping-out' in cells. Prisoners refer to the personal degradation of using a chamber pot and are more concerned with the issue of self-esteem as a human being:

In this day and age it is degrading; more so now when there is female staff on the hop; that is degrading for any of us coming out in the mornings. P1 Perth

In the mainstream you have to put your crap in a bit of newspaper, see and bung it out the windy (window)....in the all the old jails guys are

forced to do that, know? er and having a toilet is a bit strange right enough, know? 'cos it's a toilet but you don't see it really...it's like a wee bathroom...it's well hidden...know? Everybody should have their own toilet you know what I mean. 'Cos at the end of the day it's the 1990s and we should be moving to this type of building especially if you're eating in the same place with your slop. You get used to it, know? P1 Shotts Unit

Many staff however indicate the need to improve these facilities for health reasons for prisoners and themselves. It is therefore also evident how staff perceive a 'quality' environment for prisoners to be an important factor in the maintenance of control in the prison:

Well, I think these things should be regarded as basics. I think it is sad that we're even asking for these things in 1993. I think there are very few people within the penal environment who are very happy about the conditions we asking some prisoners and staff to be involved in. If you are to give a shopping list to prisoners as we have found out from the surveys, they do not put these things as a priority. You've got to separate out from desirable and essential. Now, from a managerial point of view, good sanitation, we would probably want that as an essential, because part of our remit is to maintain health and good clean living conditions for both staff and prisoners. If we don't have a reasonable sanitation process, then you are increasing your danger of being exposed to some health risk. In terms of electricity in cells...I am sure the decision to remove gas mantles and put bulbs in their place brought as much searching of people's inner selves as to whether prisoners should be allowed a socket in their cell. All changes in anybody's environment will provoke mixed reactions. I think we have to move with the times. Gov Shotts Unit

If prisoners are in a good environment it saves a lot of problems for staff. I worked in Shotts and before the new Shotts opened. At one time it was just a small place then the new place opened, we took the families round Shotts to show them what was happening. They were really annoyed at the facilities the prisoners would be having when they moved in there, but it was pointed to them that their husbands had to work in that environment. Gov 1 Peterhead

Now I was in a block serving breakfast when the water came cascading over the top flat. The toilet is blocked and 'tubs' have floated past my feet as I am serving breakfast, that's life. It's not just these guys who are living in these conditions it is the staff as well and we have to work in it. Now it is far better for me if they have their own toilet, keeping the place clean and tidy and no slopping out in the morning, water

cascading over galleries and what not. It doesn't happen as often as it used to, but when you consider this place is over 100 years old, the drains are antiquated so again they get choked occasionally and it can cause problems. Gov2 Peterhead

If you ask a prisoner - a lot of prisoners don't want integral sanitation. Two reasons: they miss the social contact with a lot of prisoners, in the slopping out, and the other thing is, who wants to sleep in a toilet? The ones that are getting designed now have an actual toilet off the actual cell, like a partition. It was designed that way, but I don't know if you have seen Shotts itself? The toilet is in the cell, the guy is sleeping and eating in a toilet. I can understand that as well, but you are taking away a lot of your accommodation if you put two cells into one and a toilet between each two cells, so every third cell you are losing. The middle cell is turned into two toilets with access from the cells on either side. Gov 2 Perth

- **Dining facilities**

In terms of the lack of dining-halls in prisons in Scotland today, it is apparent how such a facility is not provided as a reaction to the need to maintain control over prisoners within these confined spaces. In the past, many disruptions commenced in these areas, often as a result of what was perceived by prisoners to be 'inedible food'. From past experiences, open dining facilities therefore symbolise arenas for potential trouble for staff, whilst prisoners are more concerned with the provision of a decent dining facility in which they can eat, and more importantly, where they can feel personally safe:

Edinburgh, before I came here, was my starting-off prison. They have full dining-room facilities you know, tables, knives and forks. It makes it more civilised but here you just get a tray for eating in your room. It's an insulated tray to keep the meal hot but it doesn't do the job. By the time you get it in your cell it is cold. P2 Perth

I find it better separately but I am used to being in a dining room with 100 guys, but it is not for me. I see it for guys coming in first to a jail and you walk into that dining hall with 100 guys and it is a case of who is this and who is that and you have to come in.  
P1 Castle Huntly

They don't like dining halls, because, dining halls, like the grub is rubbish, and the dining hall is where there is likely to be some friction;

you are liable to say "Yuck" .... It only takes one person to go up and say, "this is shite", and there are a few sheep who follow, so that's why they don't like dining-halls. It can all get out of control. P5 Perth

In this case, space in prison is perceived by prisoners and staff in relation to how confident and comfortable they feel in terms of control (for officers) and normality, civility (for prisoners) and particularly safety (for both groups). Staff dislike dining-halls however, not only because of the prospect of unrest over food, but the raising of general grievances with prisoners. Too much open space in prison is deemed by staff to be unsafe and the atmosphere liable to explode in an outburst of violence. In the past, these outbreaks have taken place as a result of the congregation of large numbers of prisoners and the perceived feeling by these prisoners of possessing a degree of control due to the large numbers of them situated in one place. Past experience of dining in open spaces has produced this insecure perception, based upon officers' experience and hearsay. The inability for staff members to feel personally in control of a situation and over a particular space has been considered important enough to restrict the spaces used by prisoners:

Well it shouldn't be a place of tension, because they are there to dine like the rest of us, but it does. If someone has a grievance against another prisoner or an officer and it just so happens it breaks loose in the dining-hall, it is difficult to contain. If it breaks out in a smaller area it is easier to contain. PO5 Castle Huntly

When we gave prisoners steel trays and bowls they were painful instruments when hurled across the dining-hall. During the 1980s we gained experience from past troubles and chose to dine out of association. Gov2 Shotts

I am against it because I have never worked in the situation of a central dining-room. It does make it easier for officers if they have their food in separate cells as they can keep on top of any problem. They do associate in groups of 60. E Hall eats together (10) but that is possible there. The structure of Peterhead - I don't think it would be good to have them all dining. They have to eat in their cells except for the passman. PO2 Peterhead

In some cases, the officers recognise that prisoners themselves also feel safer alone in their own personal spaces, rather than in group situations which have the propensity to explode:



When we first opened, we had open dining facilities. These are now large recreation rooms. There are difficulties in prisoners settling when they first come in here and we had disruptions on a regular basis. Disruptive prisoners sought to hold demonstrations. Weak ones dared not move and if they did, they got punished from their own peer groups. Pressure was so great and the control of the facilities was so difficult that we moved to dining in the units. Prisoners now choose to dine alone in-cell with one or two others. Most avoid dining in groups. Gov1 Shotts

A vast number of demonstrations occurred in the dining-halls. Hard-men used to take dinners off the weaker elements. They can't do that so much now. PO4 Shotts

Some prisoners prefer to have their meals in their cells to have peace. For security reasons it is a better idea. PO3 Peterhead

The better the facilities the better it is for prisoners and the easier it is for us. PO4 Peterhead

- **Segregation facilities**

The use of segregation to separate particular prisoners from association with other prisoners is another example of the divergence in opinion between staff and prisoners. It is apparent the extent to which staff view control over space as control over prisoners and therefore use this form of spatial control as a means of alleviating tense situations and potential 'crisis' situations. Through spatial control strategies staff reassert their own stereotypical roles as custodians. In all case-study prisons, the regimes rely upon a system of continuous observation of prisoners and segregation as reaction to the perceived threat of a breakdown in control. In most cases, staff view this form of punishment (whether it takes the form of segregating prisoners in workparties or actually physically removing them to a segregation cell), as a relatively effective method of imposing control. This control is not only imposed upon the individual prisoner in question, but by removing him or her from their environment concerned, is perceived by staff as necessary to prevent the potential of further disruption and tension amongst fellow prisoners:

It (segregation) sometimes helps the other people in the hall because the pressure has been taken off. The segregated prisoner has been

putting pressure on them to rebel. He would be the bully-type prisoner. PO1 Perth

At the time there was no alternative. We needed to take prisoners out of the system. I saw the pressures that the whole prison in Barlinnie was under because of a handful of bad apples. Once they were taken away, the relief was unbelievable from the staff and prisoners' side. This is what this place is supposed to be doing now rather than Peterhead. I don't agree with the locking down. If you start treating someone like an animal they start acting like an animal but I wouldn't criticise the prison service for that because they were under a lot of pressure at the time. The buildings and the facilities created a lot of problems as well were un-avoidable at that time. PO3 Shotts Unit

Segregation is good on short-term basis, because it takes them away from their pals and they get bored so they are wanting something to do. In the long-term, it just turns them to soup. It is no good, long-term. PO4 Perth

There's not a lot you can really do to the disruptive prisoner other than limit the effect they can have on the wider prison population. PO1 Shotts

Personally I don't like the digger, but what the digger is there for is simply to isolate individuals from their peers. Now the majority of cases in which we actually put somebody in a digger would be probably in terms of staff assaulting, like something violent. Now that is why the digger is designed as it has been designed. Gov4 Perth

Some staff also recognise the need for segregation as a form of protection for the weak and vulnerable prisoners, by removal of these stronger elements in from the halls and galleries:

I don't know whether it works on the prisoner. But it works on the prison if you take them out of circulation. The prison will run better when you find that most of these guys on lockup are quite willing to go. The ones on lock-down have not just done something wrong. It's over the course of months. They go back into circulation and do it again and try to get another stretch but this time in the unit where it is more open and relaxed. PO3 Peterhead

It's a good control mechanism to remove them from association. It's like removing a cancer. Gov2 Shotts

Yes, at times we have to, you eventually get the situation where you need protection from protections. The weaker guy is going to get

pressurised by the heavy guy in any prison. It doesn't matter what type of prisoner you have, and being sex offenders they are prone to the same thing. Gov2 Peterhead

In some cases, the stronger elements are removed for their own good and protection:

If somebody is in such a situation that they have to be removed to segregation, they have had to have done something that is detrimental to the running of that hall. To get them away from the rest of the prisoners. Especially if the hall could 'blow-up'. The first thing, we have to protect the environment in which that prisoner is living, so he has to be taken out of there. As far as if it was doing him any good, we get a lot of prisoners who more or less ask to be segregated. A reason is if they have a problem with other prisoners in the hall and they're in association all the time. He's in danger...say it's from drugs...we never really know...we don't know everything that is happening and we never will. So when a prisoner gets to a situation where he is going to be damaged, he has to do something about it. If he is not prepared to come to one of us...In that case you are doing him a lot of good. You are giving him time to be on his own and to think for maybe a week or two about what he is going to do and he can discuss with someone. That happens quite a lot. People don't just do things. Sometimes it is for their own protection to get himself moved out. Those making trouble for trouble's sake have to be removed to segregation. If it is a reaction to something said to him a couple of days in segregation...and then replace him back in the same environment. He has to stay there and those causing the prisoner problems know that as well. In a lot of cases it is quite complex when you get to that...there are usually reasons why. Normally if you put him back into circulation there is going to be all sorts of trouble from him or...But it is a necessity. Sometimes they have to be taken out of there and put on their own to get something sorted out to make it safe for himself and for others. I don't think it is rehabilitation. You are doing him no good but you're doing him a temporary service and the place itself. PO4 Shotts Unit

The above quotations indicate that this spatial control strategy of removing prisoners to the segregation cells is also used as a means to effectively control an individual by dispossessing him/her of the characteristics of the 'self' - to stamp out individual identities and help manipulate the individual's behaviour:

Segregation has an impact. I don't see it as a form of punishment, I see it as a form of segregation for control, because you are taking this

person away from an environment where he is being disruptive. Sometimes you get a person who is, what shall we say, strong-willed? and...and you bring him out of that hall and that hall has a chance to settle down and change. Gov5 Perth

Staff recognise the differential impact that segregation can have on the individual prisoner, referring to the prisoners' different abilities to cope in such a situation and the degree to which such punishment is a positive or negative experience:

They should evaluate what is going to have the most effect and whether it relates to the actual crime or crime, the punishment given out. You have to have a mixture of the two, and in a lot of cases one would work great, like if the guy has nothing in his cell, he is not bothered, doesn't do anything but he likes being in his own cell but taking him away from that cell and putting him in a segregation unit, will affect him a wee bit but not too much. If you stick somebody who has got a lot of things and take them away from their cell and all their bits and bobs that would have a greater affect. PO3 Perth

Segregation never had an impact. The segregation unit in Barlinnie - a lot of the prisoners quite preferred it because there was only a maximum of 20 prisoners in the segregation unit. Mostly it only takes 8-10 so guys are getting exercise regularly. They're getting a shower regularly and a lot of them are there because they quite like being on their own. They don't like big crowds. So I wouldn't say it was so much of a punishment. People want to go there and get out of the way. That was certainly true in Barlinnie anyway. PO1 Shotts Unit

Prisoners tend to view such segregatory methods as a spatial manifestation of an individual prisoner's position within the power hierarchy. In being moved to the 'Digger' or segregation cells indicates to other prisoners how that individual is 'tough' or 'hard', subsequently reproducing the prisoner stereotype as 'deviant' and 'undisciplined'. Staff assert an identity as custodians, thereby re-establishing the social boundaries, differences and confrontational arena between the two groups. Evidence of these differences is apparent when prisoners are not deterred by the use of segregation as punishment:

It's hard to keep a guy that's in doing 60 days under control if he doesn't want to be kept under control. If I decided I wanted to break

out and go crackers, the prospect of spending a couple of weeks or months in the 'Digger' would certainly not deter me. P3 Perth

There is got to be a bit of that, a lot of face, but I don't think it's mainly that, although some people might see it that way, doing down time the 'Digger' is the thing to do. A lot of people like the 'Digger', that's what, they seem to think it is a punishment. See now if I make a stand on anything, I just back off and say OK "lets go to the Digger". P4 Perth

Some prisoners and staff recognise the divergence in meanings attached to the segregatory spaces of the prison by those individuals confined by them. They are critical of how segregation does not exist as a form of punishment per se, but as an arena in which those prisoners sentenced to these cells play at maintaining their stereotypical images of 'cardboard criminals'. Such responses to segregation may be viewed as attempts by prisoners to produce identities as part of a coping strategy in prison, through the creation of a status in the prison hierarchy:

A murderer who murdered in a homosexual thing looks on himself as being better than if he murdered a bairn or had sexual intercourse with 6/7 year old, he sees himself better in the pecking order, yes hierarchy is just beginning to build up now because it is only within the last 18 months we have become more or less a dedicated prison for vulnerable prisoners, though the hierarchy is just more or less settling down now. Maybe within the next 18 months, two years we will be able to see who is coming to the fore. Now we will possibly then have to start saying, right Joe Bloggs will have to move, he is putting too much pressure on others, he perceives he is better than other people and so on. Because what we don't want is protections locked up 23 hours a day here, it is not on. They are here so as they are all treated the same. Gov2 Peterhead

Sometimes you're forced into doing this...into acting it out and this can cause you a lot of problems by getting additional sentences and getting further punishments...it's being able to come to terms with this and understand it...you come into the jail as a young guy say...now you are seeing older guys in there who are in for more serious crimes...more hardened criminals say...In order for you to keep your end up, you need to just be as bad as them, know? Whereas it's just a show, but it doesn't matter 'cos eventually it just takes over you, know?...and you lose your old identity 'cos you take this new thing on and you take it outside with you as well. You're acting it out...In the cages...when I went up in the cages I was kidding on that I was er part of the whole thing you know? I knew that it was not me but because other people



had been there like say Jimmy Boyle and people you read about in these places you think I'm being regarded in the same light and that's the system conditioning you into thinking that what you are doing is alright, you know? And in other's eyes you've achieved this notoriety and you want to keep it because you find during a sentence, particularly a long term sentence it helps you to gain some form of credibility within the system because of the system. If you were a good guy who comes into jail and gets their head down and involved in various projects and courses and all that...er...that's hard, because the system puts a lot of obstacles in the way...inadvertently though...if there's a guy who's doing the best for himself...er...they'll try and stop him....it's not like that, but it appears to be that.. you can start thinking that. P1 Shotts Unit

Prisoners actually played up to it. Because it was a status. They're not just ordinary prisoners any more. Now they are in the 'Digger'. If you contain him in a segregation cell in the hall he is in, that is more of an embarrassment because he is being contained in the hall where he did what he did. PO2 Shotts Unit

Punishment has very little impact. It's like a drop of water off a duck's back. Once again, the long-termers and lifers here...how do you punish a man who is doing life? Quite a common punishment is being locked up for 7 days with no radio or papers and it has no impact. There is not enough done to understand why that man offends. PO2 Peterhead

Several prisoners also indicated how they view segregation as a 'time-out' mechanism, allowing them to get away from other prisoners in their halls and workparties. Prison segregation cells symbolise peace and quiet away from the proximity of other prisoners and staff. This form of punishment is therefore often reversed by the prisoners. On analysis of the above quotes, it is evident how segregation is perceived by prisoners as a macho image-maker, prisoners showing no remorse for their behaviour whilst in segregation and using this time and space to produce and maintain a form of personal identity as a trouble-maker. They use this form of punishment to temporarily escape the trials of prison life and to assert a form of identity based on anarchistic values. Removal and segregation of these prisoners may subsequently be viewed as a control mechanism for the authorities and a privilege for prisoners:

You just sit there and plot your next plan of attack. To me it was a gang thing and not to do with the staff. In Shotts I got stabbed in the back on

the 'phone. I retaliated when I got back. After other trouble I ended up with no entitlements and six months in the silent cell. They take you out after 30 days and then renew it. It is an internal ruling. The police had nothing to do with it. Shotts has a cell within a cell. Concrete in the floor for a bed and a canvas mat and at night I was put in a canvas gown. I was quite happy in there. I meditated and every time staff came in, just smiled. It freaked them out. I slept most of the time. P4 Peterhead

I've had every type of punishment...I've had a liquid cosh...I've been jagged...it knocks you out...after I had attacked a prison officer...and become violent...I've been put in a body belt; all these sort of things. When I went to the cages I felt I was pawing like a big cat...I saw it as me being recognised with my criminality and notoriety. But I knew deep inside that wasn't me but was how I felt I had to be in order to be anything really, no? Er... having no great sense of identity, that gives you some sense of identity. Er...I was damaging myself destructively. But punishment, I cannot think of any punishment that has ever had any effect on me in the jail...er...and I've had a lot. P1 Shotts Unit

This section has attempted to emphasise that the 'crisis' apparent within the prison system needs to be viewed in relation to the practical and symbolic meanings attached to the material spaces of the prison by both prisoners and staff. Both groups' perceptions and experiences of the 'other' group have produced and reproduced the symbolic representations of space, which are themselves tied up with the stereotype 'prisoner' and 'officer' images and prisoners' and officers' personal experiences and perceptions of each other. Recognition of, and identification with these stereotypes, produces a divergence of meaning between the two groups and therefore a difference and (more relevantly) a mismatch of how and why prison space is and should be used.

This spatial behaviour is important as it emphasises how prisoners revert to a stereotype in a reaction to their need to protect their inner 'self' and identity in a place which on entering attempts to remove their own personal characteristics and belongings and dispossess them completely. Segregation may be perceived as a shift towards a more secure and safe position, the prisoner adopting an identity which is recognised by others (both staff and prisoners) with however much disdain and which subsequently endorses the

segregatory reaction by the authorities, as a means of spatial control over social disruption (see Goffman in Chapter I).

Throughout this section it has been emphasised that space in prison is perceived by prisoners and staff as a form of relief and punishment in times of tension. It is used temporarily to alleviate the accumulation of pressure within particular environments for prisoners and staff and is a welcome method of alleviation. But what must also be emphasised is how the use of segregation exists as a symbol of power and authority in terms of control for staff and status for prisoners. In a sense, such segregatory techniques may be perceived as a medium for control but also an arena for the imposition of control over space by both groups. The need for such spatial authority (whether it be for control or status), is fuelled by one element - fear. This is based upon the accumulated tradition/experience of prison life by prisoners and officers in the establishments.

Such experience forms the crux of the 'crisis' equation in prisons. Experience reproduces stereotypical behaviour and a 'them and us' situation, where incongruities in interpretation between staff and prisoners are necessary to maintain identity and cohesion for each group as a means of coping with the fear of the 'other' - the expected and unexpected behaviour of the custodians and prisoners. The meanings attached to how spaces in prison are used and what these spaces essentially symbolise are thus produced as safety mechanisms, protecting each social group (and individuals within these groups) from the realities of the past and the resultant insecurities of the future. Such spatial representations are utilised by prisoners as a means of helping them personally cope and survive the trials of prison life, through the creation of their own personal microcosmic worlds or 'niches' (Chapter VII). These are utilised by staff as a means to alleviate tension in the prisons and increase control. Here, both groups reveal an inner need for a feeling of safety in prison. This need emanates from fear (produced through experience and rhetoric) and determines the manner in which prisoners and staff manipulate the use of space in prison through the implementation of coping strategies when faced with feelings of insecurity.

## Conclusions

This chapter represents a snap-shot in time of six case-study prisons, detailing the manner in which prisoners perceive the physical spaces of the prison (the spaces in which they live and carry on with their lives: the 'lived' spaces) and what these spaces represent to both prisoners and staff. References to visiting, dining and segregation facilities establish the extent of divergence in interpretation between prisoners and staff as to how and why these prison spaces are used and the meanings attached to them. I suggest that the meanings attached to the spaces of the prison by prisoners are bound up with the manner in which they attempt to survive in prison and produce a sense of control over their own lives and therefore the spaces in which they exist. Staff interpretations of these spaces are related to the degree of control they perceive they have over the spaces of the prison and therefore the prison population. In either cases, prisoners' and officers' own personal experiences, interpretations and opinions of prison life determine when and how a need for control is required for that individual to avert fear and produce a sense of security at a particular time and within a particular space.

The aim of this thesis is to reassert the importance and significance of the individual prisoner and officer in determining his/her own existence in opposition to (prisoners) or complementary to (officers) the penal system and its associated control mechanisms. Individuals' actions are related to creating an identity and asserting control over their own prison lives and spaces. This is obviously more relevant to prisoners than officers, as prisoners are confined against their will and therefore do not have the ability to completely distance themselves from their anxieties and fears. However, as established in this chapter, it is also evident how officers allow their own perceptions and opinions to influence their actions and adoption of social roles as custodians.

This chapter predominantly details prisoners' opinions on the materialistic and administrative elements of their prison lives. It emphasises how prisoners passively manipulate the prison regime, routine and spaces in which they are subjected to this regime, according to their own perceptions of what they believe to be correct and necessary to do, as a means of creating a secure environment and personal spaces in which to live (as determined by

experience and as viewed as necessary to carry-off the identity of 'criminal' already accrued to them). The following chapter will highlight the specificities of these spatial and social manipulations of imprisonment and emphasise the extent to which this need for safety and control over situations, spaces and times (physically, psychologically and emotionally), determines how prisoners survive and more relevantly choose to live (thereby highlighting the abilities of prisoners to assert individuality and control over their existence in prison).



## CHAPTER VII

### *Personal Space II*

In this chapter I intend to focus upon the 'active' manner in which prisoners use and manipulate the spaces of the prison (both physically and symbolically) as a means of seeking to retain and carve out their own personal non-institutional identities and statuses within the prison sub-culture. I will argue how their need to 'survive' and 'cope' in prison is bound up with their perceptions of how they are treated socially and spatially by the authorities and is therefore linked to the degree to which they perceive it necessary to adapt to and manipulate these social and spatial networks to their own advantage (as a reflection of their own need for safety and security). It will become clear how such spatial and social manipulations are individual attempts at maintaining a form of identity (Canter: 1977), status and safety (Toch: 1992). As academics we need to be fully appreciative of the ways in which assertion of the 'self' becomes not merely necessary, but vital, if prisoners are to legitimate their moral situation and essentially rise above the indignities of imprisonment and the resultant 'role dispossession' process (Goffman: 1968). The imprisonment of offenders must be viewed not merely as a 'spatial' segregation, but a 'social', 'psychological' and 'emotional' one: imprisonment does not merely restrict the spaces of the prisoner but actually challenges his/her identity and capabilities to survive and retain individuality. It confronts the very essence of an individual's being, thereby producing different reactions from individual prisoners who themselves possess very different coping abilities. As Porporino emphasises in the Foreword of Toch's "Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival":

"Toch presents us with the challenge of addressing the fact that different people feel differently about the environments in which they are placed - and this affects the degree to which they perceive they are being 'looked after with humanity'. To assume that we can anticipate the needs of all offenders and then control their reactions with the design of our environments is to discount the reality and indeed the importance of individual differences" (Toch: 1992, p. xi).

The above statement emphasises the extent to which our perceptions of the physical and social layout of the prison, and particularly of those human

beings existing within its confines, are over generalist in form. We impose spatial and social restrictions upon a population who are only there because of society's regulations on acceptable behaviour. This mixed population of designated 'deviants' are subsequently placed into an environment very much alien to what they or anyone has ever experienced before, with its strict regimes, codes of discipline and constant concern with security. As Toch emphasises, as human beings, social scientists attempt to draw meaning from experience, but in a restrictive environment like a prison, where any behaviour (and for that matter form of authority) relates to a coping strategy and the maintenance of stability, is this appropriate? Society imposes its spatial ideas upon this faceless and voiceless population and expects a particular impact whether it be in the form of retribution and/or rehabilitation.

Nevertheless as stated above a more humane approach is necessary in order to enhance the meanings drawn from prison experiences and to "reduce the structurelessness of its regime" (Toch, p.11). A phenomenological approach is therefore necessary which attempts to address how individuals operate in an environment and perceive it and adjust to it. (Toch :1992). Toch emphasises this approach in order to "reduce 'mismatch' and maximise 'match.'" (Toch, p.11). He is therefore primarily concerned with highlighting stress-related factors within the prison environment, affecting stability in the system and its smooth operation. He is in a sense explaining away the inefficiency of the penal system as established by material and ideological approaches examined in previous chapters. He subsequently focuses upon the inability of individuals to relate to the prison environment because of "human uniqueness" and the "environmental requirements of different people" (p.11), the final aim of his study being to "identify differences in the personal worlds that people need for survival" and to therefore "deploy organisational options for the best 'fit'".(Toch: 1992, p.10-11). *Such an approach attaches vital importance to the physical and social environment of the prison as a determinant of stress and instability and emphasises the existence of individuals with different experiences and abilities to cope in this environment.*

This is certainly apparent within the Scottish context. Furthermore, what this chapter will further emphasise is the extent to which prisoners are themselves

concerned not only with *coping* within the prison environment and therefore surviving, as Toch infers, but are also concerned with legitimating their position (as deviants within wider society and as prisoners within the prison) and maintaining their identity as human beings. This predisposition with the enhancement of the 'self' is also relevant to prison staff. Both groups operate under a regime which dictates the roles of the players and where stereotypical values as either prisoner or prison officer are imposed upon those of the individual. Either group are forced to legitimate their roles in response to the traditional confrontational relationship between the two. This usually takes the form of a physical utilisation of space, where the spaces of the prison are perceived by either group as arenas of confrontation and control and for the alleviation of crisis and reproduction of the group and its associated autonomy. However, in doing so both groups of individuals reproduce their stereotypes and lose their identity as individuals. The new open approach, adopted as a consequence of 'Sentence Planning', has obvious implications for the development of social relations between prisoners and officers and their need to legitimate their roles in response to interaction with the 'other'.

It is within this 'Catch 22' situation that more psychological forms of power come into play, where space in prison is perceived as a mechanism for maintaining and protecting the 'self'. This is done by creating 'niches' within the micro environment of the prison. It is instigated in an attempt to maintain stability for the individual. 'Sentence Planning' also relies upon the establishment of links with the spaces outside of the prison (the macro-environment) and communication with local communities and families (through visits and letters) and awareness of the world at large (through television and radio). It is these links and relations which help to re-establish ideas of 'worthiness' and a sense of belonging for the individual. It will become apparent the extent to which both physical and psychological utilisation of space exist as coping strategies for the identity of the group and identity of the individual respectively.

It is apparent how the use of space in the prison is associated with the exercise of power for the group (i.e. prisoners common sense of injustice and joint reactions at particular times and places produced as a show of frustration against this injustice) and the individual. In either case, such

control is significantly affected by the levels of communication between individuals within groups of prisoners and officers and between groups. It is the relationships within and between the groups which in effect determine the extent to which individuals feel it is appropriate and safe to assert control and identify as a group or individually. It is therefore important to emphasise the relevance of the level of communication within the prison which produces tension and implications this tension has for physical, social and spatial strategies. The Scottish Prison Service has effectively recognised the role communication plays in determining atmosphere and identity, through the endorsement of the 'Sentence Planning' scheme. This strategy may be viewed as both a physical and psychological form of control, implemented by the authorities and aimed at stabilising the prison environment through the recognition of the importance of the assertion of the 'self' for both prisoners and staff. Its aims have important implications for prisoners as a means of coping in prison as well as preventing group identity through the reproduction of confrontational situations, which themselves reproduce stereotypes along with a manipulation in the use of space.

In order to appreciate fully the relevance of these different forms of power and interpretations of the different uses of space (both physical and psychological), it will be necessary to examine them together due to their dependence upon one another. From this analysis, the role played by communication between and within the established social groups will become clear, as a method of confronting and alleviating differences.

### **Security and Control through Prison Design**

The utilisation of space in any prison exists essentially as a mechanism for the security and control of prisoners. As Ditchfield (1990) states:

"The conviction that prison design can directly influence the behaviour and control of prisoners has been a long standing feature of the penal system" (p.76).

As I establish in Chapter I, the design of the prison has always been determined by the principles of imprisonment of the time and a function of the particular regime installed. In more recent times, the marrying of

architecture to particular regimes and objectives (due to the continual utilisation of pre-dated prison buildings) has proved to be problematic:

"The foregoing is probably no more than to state the obvious point that prison architecture is very much a child of its times, and that its success can only be judged in relation to its ability to promote the aims and objectives of its times. If these aims or objectives are bad, or mistaken, then the better the architecture (i.e. the better the fit between design and regime) the more it simply promotes bad, or mistaken, aims - and vice versa" (Ditchfield: 1990, p.79).

The massive shift in ideology from that of the Quaker principles of separation and meditation to ideas based around association, produced specific changes in prison design in both England and Scotland. The separate tier system of cells which previously dominated prison design (the Penitentiary), gave way to separate smaller units with solid floors, to provide a more communal atmosphere (New Generation Prisons). Here, emphasis was based upon out-of-cell activity - extending the spaces of the prison by considering the individual as a member of a 'community'. Such a move inherently re-defined the role and identity of the prisoners as one of many (and therefore as part of a group). This open association in space encourages prisoners to identify with each other and identify with the injustice they believe they have been subjected to as a group. This sense of injustice is mirrored by the frustrated outbursts by prisoners.

This physical transition in prison design may be viewed as initiating a re-interpretation of the 'self' as a safety measure for prisoners as well as an increase in their sense of control over their lives. A power-dominance environment was produced, implying a need for the authorities to implement a regime based on maintaining cohesion, authority and equilibrium in the prisons - avoiding fragmentation of the 'group' of prisoners through assertion of power by the stronger prisoners and resultant demonstrations. The shift in approach and adoption of schemes such as 'Sentence Planning' is not merely an attempt to provide prisoners with a more normalised environment. It may be viewed as a shift in ideology aimed at gaining increased control over prisoners and the authorities attempt to re-establish an equilibrium in the prison. Through more open association, the physical transition in the design of prison space resulted in a re-interpretation of the role and legitimisation of



this role for both prisoners and staff. Each group now possessed common aims and objectives with regards to the acquisition of self-control.

The ease with which prisoners have tended to accept this group role has had obvious implications for the regime in prisons. The operation of the regime has required identification with the idea of the group (in order to maintain authority and cohesion), thereby legitimating the position of prisoners as an homogeneous group with particular requirements. In failing to do this in the 1980s, and as history has proven, fragmentation of the group (generally through dissatisfaction with the system by individual prisoners and staff unrest), has been mirrored by outbreaks of violence. In providing new and more normalised arenas in which to confine prisoners as a means to avert these disturbances (such as in Shotts Unit), the prison authorities have also been forced to re-design their psychological approach to imprisonment to a greater degree than was originally intended. A new psychological approach in terms of regime and the provision of facilities have had to be established. This is inherently due to the prisoners' manipulation of this new psychological approach and the success with which they have asserted themselves as an homogeneous group and legitimated their position as a group of individuals with particular requirements and demands.

### **Security and Control through Language**

The newly required form of authority outlined above is mirrored by increased security and control in two ways - through a structured regime and a propensity for increased observation.

- **Regime**

Routine is a major tool in an effective regime. From waking up at 6am to going to work, lunch, work, tea, and then being locked up again, the monotony of imprisonment exemplifies the sense of the prisoner 'doing time'. Perceptions of time encapsulate all aspects of prison and have important connotations not only for the physical but also the psychological interaction with the environment:

You have to use time in here when it is available to you. Outside you have a choice of when you can do something. In here, we don't. We have to eat when the clock says and sleep when it says. Life becomes revolved around that. When the doors are opened at 6am til they close after 9pm, its not really possible to get privacy. P3 Perth

The eventlessness of prison life determines this "doing of time as a dominant challenge to inmates" (Toch: 1992, p.28). When asked, prisoners emphasised the monotony of their day and the relentlessness of the prison routine, particularly at weekends:

We need more recreation at the weekend. That's when all the tension builds up. You're in the Unit a full day. It gets really boring and then everyone starts bitching. P5 Cornton Vale

We start cleaning at about 8am and then the Governors come in and we make their tea and that's you for the rest of the day - just making more and more tea. P2 Peterhead

I think we should have more weekend recreation because to be locked up at 4.45pm on a Saturday night is too early. Its a long time from that afternoon to the following morning. The weekends seem so long behind that door. P3 Peterhead

But what prisoners are more concerned about are the archaic restrictions of the timetable, their frustration being aimed at the extent to which routine is very much tied to issues of authority and security rather than the provision of facilities as facilities unto themselves. Prisoners feel a need for space to be used and to represent and symbolise the function it is supposed to do; not to exist as a symbolic extension of the authorities' control. As it will be shown later, prisoners emphasise a need to be able to identify with certain spaces in the prison (visiting, recreation) as belonging to them, as a means of asserting some form of personal control over their own space and 'free' time.

Such a divergence in the symbolic representation of spaces between prisoners and the authorities, often creates a tense atmosphere in the prison. Several prisoners emphasised how facilities need to be utilised in a more meaningful and efficient manner:

This place is for people who constantly reoffend. The security is all geared up to that. It doesn't work for long-termers like me. There's no full-time education. I'd prefer to do more vocational work. I don't want to qualify as a hairdresser. P3 Cornton Vale

You don't want to touch your visitors here because of the idea of passing stuff. Guys get done on suspicion here and that's a difficult thing to cope with. Total innocence becomes suspicion and you end up in closed visits. You're aware of that all the time and it does get a bit heavy at times, especially when they do a body-search. That's what can cause tension. P2 Shotts

The work is mundane and non-productive. The authorities are too concerned with the fact that we are occupied rather than what we are actually doing. P3 Perth

The worksheds are boring, for little wages. There's no hope. All we are making here is fishing rope. That is why the guys can cause trouble. What hope is there in making fishing rope and camouflage nets? I want something that is useful to me. P5 Peterhead

In Shotts Unit this is also evident, despite the excellent facilities provided and the relative freedom with which prisoners can use them. This emphasises how it is not the facilities available, but the attitude towards their use and meanings attached to them by prisoners and staff which affects the success of these facilities:

Visiting facilities are relaxed. There are no cameras and you feel alone. But I'd like to be able to bring people into my cell to show them how I live, like they do in Barlinnie. If they want to trust us, they have to give us a chance. P3 Shotts Unit

In the main jail they take their time to 'phone down to tell us that visitors have arrived. The main jail screws don't like it or us. They've left visitors sitting there. We wait for them and when they do eventually arrive we find that they've been sitting up in the waiting room for the last half an hour. The next time your visitors come and they are genuinely late you start bawling. Its all wee games that can upset you. P5 Shotts Unit

Visiting facilities are excellent here and I am satisfied I can maintain a certain degree of security. PO3 Shotts Unit

You're not allowed any contact here at all. Anything happens and you're suspected for taking drugs and even if you're innocent you're

still punished for it. You're immediately taken back to the cells. It needs to be more relaxed. We have cameras and officers watching and afterwards we are rubbed down and shoes and mouth checked. P1 Cornton Vale

As with all elements of security, the basis of its premise lies with an inherent mistrust of the other by the staff - the prisoners themselves:

Tension in the prison is usually due to a mistrust of prisoners. I think the major thing is a safety element. There's not much chance of a hostage situation in the circumstances of a lock-down. PO1 Shotts

This is apparent even in Shotts Unit where routine is very much under-utilised as a method of security and control, due to the ethics of the Unit being based upon trust and responsibility of the individual prisoner:

It is difficult here. The tension can be apparent at times in relation to 'them and us'. When a situation arises, the old barriers come up again. At least here we have the meetings where we can get to the bottom of problems. I don't think there will ever be a time when the 'them and us' situation will be completely ruled out, due to the nature of the relationship. We have to keep control of prisoners and their space. PO4 Shotts Unit

Existing alongside the regime factors, the control element to imprisonment is also interpreted as an outcome of the secureness of the physical boundaries of the prison. In all case-study prisons, it is evident how the presence of thick concrete walls, grill-gates and reinforced roofs are perceived by staff as important properties of utmost necessity, these determining the secureness of the establishment. References to the reliability of design are often based upon the stereotype of the 'escaping convict', constantly attempting to break-free at any opportune moment. From the evidence so far, it is evident that this is an unfair representation. Many prisoners complete their sentences, disagreeing with the form of punishment imposed and harbouring a sense of injustice, but at the same time choosing to do their 'bird' (time) without serious confrontation. The language used by staff to describe and refer to prisoners, fuels this idea of the 'criminal' and 'deviant' and in doing so, reasserts officers' own roles as 'keepers to the gate':

The advantages of security here, are that you are isolated. You can cut down the risk of other prisoners becoming involved. Plus you have the grill-gates at the end of the sections. PO4 Shotts

The layout itself is fairly good for security because the cameras can pick up between each area, so there are no blind spots if you like. The buildings themselves are quarry stone and to drill through that would take a long time. We have been putting stuff into the cells and using drills to get into it and it is taking a day to just drill through a wall, so as far as that is concerned, security is good. The drawback is the bars rust very easy in the sea air so we have to keep on top of that, that is a security risk, the building is OK; the bars are not. So we have to keep a tight watch on that and keep it up to date. Gov 2 Peterhead

Grill-gates produce a safe environment. From a security and control point of view they allow you to control prisoners in smaller groups. Gov1 Shotts

- **Observation - Intrusion on the 'self'**

In exploring the development of the penal system and this new psychological approach to penalty, it is necessary to emphasise how observation has played an increasingly important part in the security and control within penal institutions. The observation of offenders reflects a feeling of control for staff:

I like our flat system at Shotts as opposed to the gallery design in the older prisons. Staff like the idea of observation in the old Victorian prisons. The flat structure here doesn't give them the opportunity to "walk the gallery". The officer becomes more static. There is more emphasis on the prisoners being a part of a unit and responsible in that way. Gov1 Shotts

There are disadvantages in observation here. All you can see is the landing upstairs which isn't helpful. You rely on hearing and you have to go up the landing to check things out for yourself. It does have its advantages because if there is trouble in one part of the prison, the rest of the prisoners can't see it, but of course you can't rely on them not knowing or hearing. PO2 Shotts

Staff quite often feel more comfortable in the type of halls we have in terms of design where the staff on the top gallery can be seen from the bottom gallery. Observation is important for safety. Gov2 Perth



As is evident here, emphasis is placed on controlling the spaces in which prisoners live as a means to controlling prisoners' behaviour. This is carried out in such a way as to support the regime rather than being an integral part of it as was true in past times.

As will be indicated later on in this chapter, such an approach is severely constrained by what Toch (1992) refers to as the attempts of individual prisoners to tenuously survive within the prison environment, through the creation of their own 'niches' or methods of survival (both physically and psychologically) in prison. In doing this, prisoners may be perceived as attempting to operate outside of the control ethic. They utilise their available time and space to their advantage, maintaining a degree of individuality and preserving a form of personal identity. In effect, both prisoners and staff set out to achieve psychological control over shared space, with a mutual aim of surviving as individuals as part of a larger group and within the defined stereotypical roles and expectations attached to that group by the 'other'.

The belief in observation as an effective method of security and control has infiltrated all areas of the prison:

It's easy to see at a glance within the main concourse. There is not really any place a prisoner can hide. We don't have to go and search.  
PO2 Shotts Unit

This design lends itself to good observation and communication throughout the halls. Staff have the ability to be constantly aware of any incident. Gov2 Perth

In the worksheds, employment skills are relatively simple and are easy to watch over and control. Machine work and woodwork benches are used in open plan areas and designed for smaller numbers of prisoners. Once again the physical spaces of the work-sheds represent arenas where the opportunity for association between prisoners determines the need for increased observatory tactics across space by staff:

Our workshops are in smaller units now. When we first opened in 1987 we had three large workshops. One took 25-30 prisoners; Engineering took 65; the Laundry took 100 and the Textile workshop took 130. Today you find tighter controlled units with structured walls. We have

significantly reduced trouble in the work area. We like to make prisoners aware they are part of a group. Gov1 Shotts

In visiting rooms, security cameras, widely spaced tables and an obvious prison officer presence is evident:

I think they're too hard here in visits. They sit right behind you and can hear what you are saying. P4 Cornton Vale

I would like more privacy as there are people right next to you and officers listening. There is little space between the tables. P2 Peterhead

During the day and night, all behaviour is constantly monitored. It is apparent that the psychological presence of authority is as important a method of constraint to adverse behaviour of prisoners as was evident in past times. This concern for surveillance reveals how the use of space in prison is harnessed to the ethics of control and containment. Prisoners are locked up during the night out of sight, control being at its maximum with prisoners separated in their own restricted spaces, out of association with other prisoners and therefore out of 'harm's way'.

During the day, increased observation becomes necessary, the spaces available to prisoners where they associate and congregate (and therefore possess the ability to assert control and challenge authority) being a major threat. Such surveillance becomes necessary for staff as a means of producing a feeling of safety and control over the prison *environment*. Control over the spaces used by prisoners determines control of the prisoners by staff, this endorsing a need for ultimate observation across the prison and all prisoners. Group control rather than recognition of individuals, determines a greater sense of security for staff. An individualistic approach to prisoners is only implemented when prisoners are restricted in confined spaces alone. Even then it is more appropriate for staff to view prisoners as an homogenous group of 'deviants' whose actions can be generalised along the lines of those expected by stereotypical 'prisoners'. To work in smaller, confined spaces and close to prisoners (as suggested by Woolf: 1993) implies a need to personalise them and challenge the stereotypes and 'knowledge' of prisoners by the officers concerned. Such an approach would require a huge cultural shift, and as has been established earlier, is something by which the aims of Sentence

Planning have been challenged. Officers' feeling of safety (through experience and 'knowledge' of the 'other') is doubted if relationships with prisoners become too personal, and legitimacy of their status as officers and custodians therefore defied.

Prisoners realise this constant observance of their behaviour. In most cases they interpret it as an indictment of their privacy and their moral conduct:

There's too much security during visits. We need more chances to be alone and have some privacy. Visitors aren't treated properly and both our visitors and us are constantly looked down on and not trusted. P5  
Peterhead

It became clear how many prisoners are outraged by this underlying perception of their group as 'untrustworthy' individuals. It is evident how the intrusion of officers into a prisoner's own personal space, whether it be physically (as in cell searches and constant observation even during lock-up times through cell-spy holes) or psychologically (through the constant feeling of being observed), produces a feeling of insecurity and distrust and a blatant invasion of privacy and the confines of the prisoner's 'self'.

This is further invoked by the regime and design of the particular establishment. In being confined within the more normalised prison environments of today, and in having access to facilities which were previously unobtainable, it is evident how the stripping of the prisoner's 'self' on entering prison (and as outlined by Goffman: 1968), no longer occurs to such an extent. It is important to realise how relevant these feelings of intrusion upon the 'self' are. Prisoners are more and more given the opportunity to reproduce their own identity, and open up through the implementation of the 'Sentence Planning' scheme, along with improved communication with spaces outside of the prison (T.V, radio, telephones) and education etc.. However, prisoners are subsequently more aware of this intrusion on their privacy as they have been provided with an opportunity through these media to produce their own personal space as a way of coping with their sentences.

It is here that a mismatch in the meanings attached to space by prisoners and officers occurs and has important implications for the development of

relationships between prisoners and staff. In being concerned with elements of security and control, officers are more concerned with maintaining knowledge of and power over the spaces of the prison. Prisoners' needs to identify with the spaces in which they live are perceived by staff as a means of gaining a greater degree of control over them and the prison (therefore both physically and psychologically). Such a divergence in meanings attached to the spaces of the prison by both officers and prisoners (particularly prisoners' cells and their personal spaces during visiting time), continues to fuel the inherent mistrust between the two groups - a mistrust based upon the perceptions of either group of each other in relation to the stereotypical 'screw' and 'criminal'. It is apparent how officers show limited consideration to an individual prisoner's attachment to his/ her personal spaces (cells), this point illustrating the basic mistrust staff have of prisoners as well as officers' personal needs to constantly assert authority:

There are a lot of petty rules. We have pinboards but we can't use the walls for stuff with blue tack. We all do and they allow it but every 2-3 months its "Get everything off your wall". They don't like you to get too comfortable or attached. P3 Cornton Vale

They're constantly watching you, checking up on you during recreation time when you have the opportunity to be on your own. Cell searches are done with no regard for your personal possessions. P3 Perth

Officers utilise this perception of prisoners as 'criminals' and attempt to gain increased control in order to reassert their identity as 'gate-keepers' and legitimate their own moral position within the prison system. In being so spatially aware, but at crossed-purposes, both prisoners and officers reproduce their own stereotypes, in an attempt to challenge the 'other' and their perceptions and values attached to these spaces. This has the effect of limiting communication networks between these groups, due to the legitimisation of their own needs and roles and assertion of the idea of the 'other'. The reproduction of these stereotypes inherently produces the incongruities between the groups.

### Categorisation of the 'self' - a control ethic

It is evident throughout this study that both prisoners and staff attach meanings to the spaces in which they exist. Prisoners do this as a means of coping and surviving the prison subculture and as a way of legitimating their own position at that time, thereby maintaining an identity as an 'individual' and as a member of a particular social group. Prison officers view space as a means to control prisoners and feel safe themselves. As was established in Chapter VI, the inherent mismatch between the spatial awareness of the two groups is apparent in all areas of the prison, including dining, recreation, visiting and discipline. It must be emphasised how important the control mechanism and this need for constant control is within the system. Control ethics infiltrate the entire prison arena, from the passing of a sentence, to the doing of time and release of the prisoner. It has been established how a certain psychological approach, endorsing prisoners as stereotypical 'criminals', projects this necessity for control. From the outset, prisoners are categorised in accordance with their age, sex, offence, sentence imposed and previous prison record. More importantly, and as detailed in Chapter II, prisoners are categorised in accordance with how dangerous a threat they are perceived to be to the public and prison staff. As McManus (1995) states:

"Security categories are a crucial determinant of many of the conditions of imprisonment to which a prisoner is subjected" (p.62)

These categories determine not only the rights of the individual in accordance with the amount of visits, privileges, education and recreation he/ she is entitled to, but also attitudes towards prisoners in general. A prisoner's own personal 'baggage' which identifies him or her as an individual is effectively used as the basis of the control mechanism by the authorities. These categories are both physically and psychologically imposing. They label and stigmatise. These identity 'tags' are imposed through the imposition of particular boundaries around prisoners in accordance with the meanings of these social 'tags'.



- **Control through Gender**

In several cases in Scotland, these categories have important connotations for how space is utilised as a control mechanism in prison. In Cornton Vale Women's Institution, categorisation is based upon the sex of offenders. The micro-environment of the prison is determined not merely by length of sentence or offence committed as in most male institutions, but more importantly by the behaviour of an individual during that sentence in relation to the authorities' stereotypical view of how women should act and behave as 'females'. It is evident how the authorities essentially treat the women in Cornton Vale as being 'odd' and 'mentally incapable'. This is a reaction to the fact that, as women, they have done the 'unexpected' and 'unethical' as far as their gender is concerned and committed crimes (Carlen: 1983). Prisoners are in my opinion still treated as being what Carlen, in her study of 'Women's Imprisonment' (1983), refers to as 'outwith femininity' and expected to act in a 'mentally incapable' manner - as 'deviants to the norm' and offenders. Such treatment is reflected in the socio-spatial restrictions imposed on female offenders. Most prisoners spend an initial period in Sierra Block (the segregation block) on entering prison for observational purposes. The need for such an approach questions the degree to which imprisonment of physically or mentally ill people can be justified in the first place:

A lot of admissions are in a bad way when they come into jail and are put on supervision for self-inflicted violence, or coming off drugs. PO4 Cornton Vale

The system at Cornton Vale is set up in such a way as prisoners have to go through various stages to gain access to psychologists or social workers or the nurse. Prisoners are frustrated by the way in which they are treated. Many are frustrated by the manner in which they have to request for help. They are made to feel as if they are making too much of a fuss and to be a nuisance to staff when asking to see a specialist of any kind:

You're meant to go through the Unit Officer then the Senior Officer then the Principal Officer. It's frustrating like that. Especially when I got on so well with everyone else. I went straight to the Governor and got sent to the Psychologist immediately. The officers start rumours - they think that I'm treated nicely and getting it easy. P1 Cornton Vale

I now have to see a Welfare officer to see a Social Worker. Welfare Officers are all officers themselves and sometimes you don't want to talk to them but you have to go through them. P3 Cornton Vale

As Carlen (1983) states:

"the Scottish female prisoner is first debilitated by being defined as being both within and without sociability, femininity and adulthood; and then defined out of existence as being beyond care, cure and recognition." (p.16)

Cornton Vale is certainly unlike that of a prison in the expected sense of the word. It looks very much like a university campus and as such can be misleading as to the type of regime operating. Carlen (1983) emphasises that Cornton Vale does tend to subject prisoners to a high degree of security, purely due to the fact that it is the only female institution in Scotland for all categories of offenders. This is established as being a consequence of the minority status of women prisoners. Tensions therefore tend to run high in Cornton Vale, the physical attractiveness and 'campus design' being misleading in relation to the atmosphere inside and psychological control-ethics in operation. Inmates constantly feel like they are being observed, despite their freedom to move around the prison when permitted:

I'm always being watched here because I'm a wanderer. Sometimes they say I'm not doing the work. I hate the job. They turn my room over at random because of my drugs charge. P4 Cornton Vale

As a means of attempting to survive this 'inadequate' existence they are made to feel they lead, many prisoners try to assert themselves socially and get on the best way they can. Some prisoners expressed a need to find officers they can communicate and identify with. In many cases these were older members:

I prefer to speak to the older officers. Young ones are so nervous of getting their fingers rapped, they follow rules to the letter. They've always got to check things so you never get an answer. P3 Cornton Vale

I like to speak to older guys. I can't get used to the young staff. They cause bitchiness. They are quite strict being so young. They have petty rules. They shout and bawl to be heard. P4 Cornton Vale

Several prisoners explained how they like the idea of male staff working in the establishment, particularly those who have previously worked in male establishments. Officers' perceived 'experience' of prisons instigates a greater degree of respect from prisoners:

I like male officers. It balances it up. I do trust them - one in particular has restored my faith in men. P1 Cornton Vale

I like some of the male officers. They're more understanding, especially those from other prisons and not straight out of college. P4 Cornton Vale

Male officers also stated how they enjoyed working at Cornton Vale, but were frustrated at not being able to do their job properly. In some cases it is apparent how the experience attached to being an officer and carrying out a custodian role is more important to officers than the actual need to identify with and understand the issues affecting female prisoners. The need for officers to legitimate their position is subsequently paramount:

We don't have complete equal opportunities here - we don't do Reception duties. Half the male staff here have done it before and have the experience. There's no need to re-train female staff when they can use us. Its because they don't want a male officer in the position of seeing a female undress. I sit upstairs with seven females alone in the blocks. It doesn't make sense. PO1 Cornton Vale

Parts of the job I can't do such as strip and rubdown searches. I'm losing out on 'hands-on' experience. I don't have reception experience either. PO3 Cornton Vale

Female officers seem to be more willing and able to identify with and understand the problems associated with having male officers in prisons. They encourage it, but recognise a potential area of tension with regards officers' gender:

Some it doesn't bother if there are male officers around. In Sierra block we have prisoners who have been sexually abused and hate men anywhere near them. Eventually they build up some sort of

relationship but are always wary. Most men won't lift the spyhole in the cell door in the morning to wake the prisoners up as you're supposed to.

Both staff and prisoners emphasise the degree to which prisoners are constantly subjected to verbal abuse from their peers. Such 'bitching' is again perceived as a factor specifically relating to women. It was emphasised how women are more likely to verbally rather than physically abuse another prisoner or member of staff:

There's a lot of bitching that goes on. Again its not always face-to-face but behind the back. Prisoners do try to play staff off against one another and it's hard not to get involved when you're sitting amongst them in the Units. PO3 Cornton Vale

The 'beasts' get constant verbal abuse here. PO1 Cornton Vale

Bitching goes on in here. People get jealous in here and just won't leave you alone. Somebody was in my room yesterday reading all my mail, just because I get letters everyday from my boyfriend. P5 Cornton Vale

This verbal abuse produces a need for the women to keep themselves to themselves and steer clear of any perceived trouble. They attempt to maintain their self-identity and keep safe, away from any form of verbal abuse, by living independently from their social peer group and creating social and spatial 'niches' in which they feel safe on their own:

I think being here has made me a stronger person and improved me. It has hardened me - there's no give or take and no trust here. Its quite a single life you're leading. I'm always by myself and that's how its got to be. It's a lonely life. P1 Cornton Vale

Being overtly friendly with other prisoners is to allow themselves an opportunity to be manipulated and verbally attacked and brought to the attention of the authorities. The tensions associated with being treated 'outwith' femininity produce a situation where prisoners are forced to deal with this stigmatisation alone as a means of preventing provocation from other women and therefore their own physical or verbal reaction to this (and the subsequent assertion of this 'deviant' female stereotype). This has

important implications for the development of a community spirit in the blocks and units, and a stress-free atmosphere in the prison overall:

It's the people here who are the problem. It's OK being in a group as long as people are nice to you. Me personally, I don't bother anyone. You can be friends but you have to be careful. P5 Cornton Vale

We all put up with each other to the best of our abilities, but compatibility is not good and putting long-termers together doesn't work. Its hard to cope. We have more time together to get to know one another and get on one another's nerves. P3 Cornton Vale

The minority status of female offenders has further implications for the facilities and resources available. Employment in Cornton Vale is based around sewing, laundry-work and generally maintaining a clean and hygienic prison environment. The only vocational training course available is in hairdressing. All these opportunities are specifically related to 'female-type' work. There is no training to prepare women for employment outside of prison. As Carlen (1983) states:

"Training for domesticity and motherhood has always been a dominant feature of women's regimes both in Great Britain and in the United States. The so-called training programmes are nearly always linked to traditional (and totally unrealistic) conceptions of women's roles" (p.19).

This is explained by the authorities as being due to a lack of resources and more importantly the fact that, because of their gender, the women are not allowed to move to other male establishments, where employment opportunities such as welding and electrical engineering are available. Plans are being made but it is unclear as to when they will be implemented:

A lot of work is female-oriented. Looking ahead we are trying to allow four low category females to go to other establishments to be trained in electrical work. Penninghame is a possible option for that. Gov1 Cornton Vale

'Sentence Planning' at Cornton Vale suffers similar problems to those encountered at Peterhead. Due to the lack of places to progress to, the strategy is perceived as mere lip-service and untenable:



'Sentence Planning' is a joke. There's nothing for the women at all. There's little training and they can't achieve the goals set up by the strategy. PO3 Cornton Vale

'Sentence Planning' is mainly made for male establishments. You can't progress here. It starts in Sierra block, then Sierra to Bravo then Bravo to Papa and then you stagnate. You end up progressing too fast with a long-sentence and that can be frustrating. From Papa you can go backwards - that's the only way. PO1 Cornton Vale

'Sentence Planning' is a farce. They tell you what job you're going to even after you've planned differently. You answer these stupid questions time and time again. The only good thing is the personal officers, but even then they're still officers. P1 Cornton Vale

These findings endorse the manner in which female prisoners are treated as being outwith the prison system due to their gender, and a lack of resources and finance to deal with their needs as offenders and women in prison.

- **Control through Space**

In Castle Huntly, the low categorisation of offenders ('D' category) allows a less strict regime and control ethic. The threat of being sent back to a high security Young Offenders' Institution at Polmont is effective and is usually implemented when prisoners attempt to abscond. The threat is not only in relation to the restricted environment of Polmont, but plays upon young offenders' concerns about social and spatial relations within that prison. Not only is there a more toughened section of the community detained in Polmont because of their behaviour, but they are also detained under closed conditions and a stricter regime:

I say to them - "If you want to run then go. But remember you'll be caught and have to spend the rest of your sentence in Polmont. There'll be no more easy-time for you" PO2 Castle Huntly

In Peterhead, the removal of a prisoner to the mainstream is again utilised as a method of control. A shift in environment, conditions and the social relations within that environment were endorsed as punishment because of the associated threat from other mainstream prisoners:

Prisoners know how fortunate they are to be here even if they won't admit it. Granted, its a long way from many of their families. But they're safe and they don't want to risk having to go back to the mainstream. They're too frightened for their own safety. Gov2  
Peterhead

Once again the spatial dimension and location within the prison system is important to prisoners, but is used by the authorities as a means of regulating behaviour. The threat of victimisation not only heightens a prisoner's socio-spatial awareness, but furthermore re-endorses particular stereotypes of prisoners as 'deviant'. It is evident how such stigmatisation is used as a form of control by both groups - by prisoners to assert a degree of authority over peers perceived as being lower in social status than themselves (e.g. sex offenders) and establish positions within the prisoner hierarchy. The authorities utilise their knowledge of protection through segregation and the manner in which it stigmatises prisoners, as a means of controlling prisoners physically and psychologically through categorisation. In either cases, both groups utilise this form of identification as a method of legitimating their own positions and roles within the prison social environment. The stigmatisation of prisoners has a significant side-effect. This 'labelling process' effectively restricts and bounds and secures and controls prisoners and staff. In doing so, it determines the meanings attached to particular spaces by prisoners as protective arenas. Stigmatisation legitimates authority through the endorsement of the idea of the need for safety for prisoners. It reasserts particular stereotypes of these prisoners who require safety because of the perception of the crimes they have committed by the other prisoners, officers and those outside the prison boundaries. It therefore legitimates the need for such security and control mechanisms for prisoners. The prison system may be seen as invoking this necessity for safety amongst prisoners, substantiating its own control mechanisms as necessary and productive.

### **Spatial Segregation : Safety or Stigma?**

This need for safety is an issue which is not only relevant to young offenders, sex and female offenders: it affects all prisoners within the system. The concern for the secure maintenance of the 'self' produces stress where the individual finds that "familiar environmental transactions - customary ways

of coping with the environment - are hopelessly challenged" (Toch: 1992, p.186). In 'Living in Prison', Toch establishes how inmates in his American case-study prisons are predominately victimised by being challenged due to their sexuality. Homosexual inferences are the norm. In Scotland, this is not the case in all prisons. Such references are apparent, but in relation to sex offenders only. Other prisoners experience bullying as a consequence of the area they originally come from. Victimisation is based more upon the macro-environment of the individual rather than the micro-environment in which he/she currently lives. It is not directly aimed at an individual's self-esteem and character as a human being, but tends to be determined more by their sentence and background and therefore history as an individual outside of the system:

Gangs tend to be made up of people from the same area. They usually know each other from outside and stick up for one another. If there's going to be trouble, they operate as a group, harassing an individual.  
PO3 Castle Huntly

Whatever the basis for bullying, it is usually incited by the existence of an aggressor and a victim, and therefore of fearlessness and fear. Aggression does not always take the form of violent outbursts against an individual. It is often unprovoked and verbal and more psychologically devastating due to an enhanced possibility (through association with other prisoners at any time of the day) for it to occur. It does not necessarily have to be secretive or hidden away. It can be blatantly vicious:

A lot of bitching and cat-calling goes on in here, especially in the dorms. We can't watch them all the time. PO3 Castle Huntly

Nightsan in here causes problems in the units. People can get out to go to the toilet and cat-call through doors. There's no place for offenders to hide here and sometimes the unseen is more frightening than what they see here. PO2 Castle Huntly

The direct consequence of bullying and victimisation is the segregation of the victim. The social status of the victim becomes spatialised and, once again, the authorities attempt to control the problem through a change in environment for the prisoner concerned and the segregation of similar types of offenders

together (with similar problems of which officers are knowledgeable and able to contend with efficiently and securely).

Segregation however, does not disperse this victimisation problem. As will become evident below, in most cases it heightens the opportunity for bullying to occur, in that it places an homogenous group of frightened and vulnerable individuals in one space. This provides an ideal arena for the manipulation by those stronger elements (of what is already perceived as a weak group of prisoners) and who would never usually have the audacity to assert themselves aggressively in the mainstream. The vulnerable become further stigmatised and bullied as well as spatially outcast within this restricted environment. A circle of victimisation is established where certain prisoners become socially and spatially restricted by the prison culture. Toch (1992) refers to such protective regimes as the 'flight' premise - retreating to safety and therefore seeking sanctuary. In his study, it is indicated how such a move was perceived as 'unmanly':

"A person may gain physical safety, but he cannot at the same time remain manly in the subcultural sense of the word" (p.217).

This is also apparent in Scotland. It is evident how doing time in a prison such as Peterhead or Shotts 'A' Hall (Scotland's Toughest) is both spatially and socially stigmatising:

I want the categories changed. I want to have the same entitlements as ordinary offenders and be categorised as an offender and not a sex offender. They still treat people like animals and so they will be animals. P2 Peterhead

I've never liked this system of segregation. And there is stigma attached to Peterhead. And what happens next time when the guy gets done for housebreaking and he has Peterhead on his cards? He has to go on protection during this sentence because he was on the last sentence. At the moment about 10% of the prison population are on protection and it will continue to rise. Prison Psychologist Peterhead

Everyone looks after themselves. They have to. If you move on you do get a lot of hassle because you have been in Peterhead. I wouldn't be prepared to take that risk. P3 Peterhead

Staff are particularly aware of such stigma and in some cases reproduce it through their language:

I don't agree with the segregation of 'beasts'. It highlights their crime. When up there (in Peterhead), they talk about their crimes between them. It can't do any good. It would make more work for staff to put them in the mainstream. PO3 Cornton Vale

Such stigmatisation labels all prisoners at Peterhead, even those individuals serving different sentences for different unsexual and unrelated crimes. Such prisoners are themselves stigmatised for being vulnerable and therefore 'weak' and unable to cope in the mainstream prison system:

Everyone thinks Peterhead is a terrible place. We need to make the prison more open and to shake off the stigma from its violent past and now sex offenders. Sex offenders shouldn't be hidden away. There is nothing here to hide. These prisoners are all vulnerable. PO2 Peterhead

Most of the people here just can't face up to their crimes and have nowhere to go. They're not all sex offenders and so we don't need such heavy security. P5 Peterhead

We need different sections and in that way guys that don't want trouble can keep away. They like to frighten those on protection and put them in with the gangsters. They did that to me. I was put on a rule for intimidation when I got here. Guys were frightened of me because I wouldn't speak to anyone. But I'm here for a reason. P5 Peterhead

Making the move to Peterhead is therefore a difficult decision. It has important psychological consequences for 'doing time' in such a segregated environment and moving away, not only from the mainstream with all its attached facilities and progressive system (hall and establishment based), but also spatially in relation to the location of the prison. Many prisoners' families experience problems in getting to the prison for visits:

I have two children. Instead of taking two fortnightly visits I take one weekend one. My wife is exhausted. A coach to Glasgow then to Ayr then here. As soon as it starts snowing here I 'phone and tell her not to bother. I just don't know what is going on sitting here in my cell. P2 Peterhead



Stigmatisation is also apparent in Cornton Vale. Unlike the male prisons, female sex offenders and child abusers are labelled “beasties” by both prisoners and staff (due to the nature of their crimes and endorsement of the prisoner hierarchy where sexual offenders are perceived to be the ‘lowest-of-the-low’). Nevertheless, these offenders are made to serve their sentences unsegregated. They live in the units with other prisoners and work alongside them. Of the sex offenders interviewed, they did not express any problems with this. However, it is apparent that their inclusion in the mainstream creates discomfort for other prisoners. The hierarchy of crimes in Cornton Vale regards these offenders to be ‘outwith’ the prisoner group. Communication with these prisoners creates problems for those they share units with. In being spatially close to these offenders, other prisoners are themselves stigmatised:

They should consider who you end up living with here. Some girls clash. The Beast lassies are mixed in with us. Nothing happens to her. We get it all. It’s all mind games. P4 Cornton Vale

Despite the opportunity for manipulation by the prisoners within Peterhead, it is apparent how such stigmatisation does not overtly concern them whilst detained in the prison. As established above, bullying continues to occur but is worth tolerating for what is psychologically perceived as a greater degree of protection. Such a geographical shift tends to symbolise a more relaxed environment and attitude, and within what is perceived as a more restricted but nevertheless controlled, comfortable and relatively safe environment:

It doesn’t bother me being here away from the mainstream. There are a lot of older guys here. We behave ourselves and so are mixed in with two other regimes on the other flats. Staff see us as a better class of prisoner and we’re allowed more recreation and visits. P3 Shotts

The consequences of being placed on protection are that prisoners become concerned with their immediate space or micro-environment, and therefore the quality of social relations between them and staff:

Sex offenders are different from mainstream prisoners. They will tend to communicate with staff a lot more than usual. We trust them more - we’re a different type of person and so there’s more of a community in here. P3 Shotts ‘A’ Hall

With this type of prisoner we don't have any wilful damage. They're more willing to get on and treat us and their environment fairly. PO4 Peterhead

Such a phenomenon may be viewed as the psychological awareness of prisoners of the need to protect their own surroundings for reasons of safety. The safety of prisoners is determined in terms of their ability to control their private space and reassert their own identity, and essentially be 'themselves'. On protection, this ideal encapsulates all parts of the prison routine, the danger being that prisoners and the authorities accept the maintenance of a controlled and safe existence in place of intervention, and programmes aimed at rehabilitation. Maintenance of the status quo is the first priority for either group, and prison authorities have inevitably become seriously inadequate in recognising the need for these prisoners to progress. Prisoners have tended to become detached from the mainstream and effectively reliant upon the system for the maintenance of an environment in which they can feel safe, deal with the increased burden of the crimes (emanating from the prison subculture), and thus be themselves:

I think it is terrible that sex offenders are segregated and that the SPS condones the attitude of the bulk of prisoners in saying that they are beasts. When I went to Perth and looked at long term prisoners, nearly 20% were or had at one time served a sentence for a sex offence. It was nearly a 5th but they weren't in there for a sex offence at that time. Most of these guys would have been screaming beasts at others so there is a lot of hypocrisy. And these are just the people with sexual convictions. If you think of the number who have not been convicted it would be much higher, so I think the reason ordinary criminals look down on sex offenders is that they want someone to look down on. Someone who is worse than I am, that sort of thing and the sex offenders are scapegoats. By giving them separate accommodation you are condoning this. Its a tricky one because if you are not going to give them separate accommodation they are going to get threatened, but I still think there are prisons where sex offenders mix with other offenders. It can be done. I think if the whole of the SPS was determined to have integrated prisons I think they could do it. They would need enormous resources because you can't keep people barred up. There would be a transition period. Prison Psychologist Peterhead

The spatial awareness of prisoners is not necessarily always confrontational. Prisoners' requirements for safety and a relaxed environment actually

produce a more conscious approach by both staff and prisoners and a greater degree of tolerance and communication between them. Such tolerance may be viewed as a communal understanding by both groups to utilise prison space in such a way as to create and maintain a safe environment. Most prisoners do this in the mainstream, but what becomes clear in Peterhead, is how this need for safety by prisoners is not necessarily an endeavour by prisoners to increase control over the spaces in which they live and reproduce a more personalised identity (see later). In Peterhead, a further identity as sex offender and 'beast' has been imposed on prisoners by those prisoners in the mainstream, who themselves are essentially reacting to the social prison hierarchy and who feel the need to legitimate a form of social status in prison by behaving threateningly towards these offenders.

In being forced to carry this 'label' as it were, and in response to spatialise this stigma, by moving prisoners to Peterhead, prisoners are less able and, more importantly, less willing to create a confrontational environment for themselves. They are personally relieved by their segregation to an environment like Peterhead where they can concentrate on carrying out their sentences safely. As such, these prisoners are more dependent on the system to provide and secure an identity for them, rather than be able them to do it for themselves.

Many staff recognise prisoners' reliance on the system, viewing this as inadequacies of the individual to cope with the stigmatisation. They perceive this as a problem of the individual rather than of the system of segregation as a whole, and by personalising the cause of dependency, seem to try to absolve themselves of responsibility, thereby immediately endorsing the need to socially and spatially segregate those individuals who are unable to cope in the mainstream:

They should be in the mainstream. They just can't handle it - they give up too easily sometimes. You know what they say - 'if you can't do the time, don't commit the crime'. P3 Peterhead

It is evident how only limited help (particularly psychological) at the time of the case study was available for prisoners convicted of sexual crimes. This is

certainly surprising particularly in relation to the manner in which sexual 'deviants' in the system are viewed as psychologically inadequate:

A lot of us do need help and there's limited going about. The Prison Psychologist is always busy and you have to fight to see her. P5 Peterhead

'Sentence Planning' had not at the time of this study been introduced at Peterhead, and both staff and prisoners emphasised how they felt very much separated from the mainstream, considering themselves the forgotten 'other'. They have nowhere to progress to because of the nature of their crimes and it seems, in being segregated at Peterhead or Shotts 'A' hall, are furthermore perceived as unlikely candidates for the responsible prisoner scheme:

There are no real targets to set because we can't go anywhere. The idea of the prison officer is good to tell problems to but it hasn't done anything for me. 'Sentence Planning' isn't needed to increase control - they do that and get to know us during the day when they are working. P3 Shotts

It became clear however, that more help is to be administered in the future with emphasis being placed on the employment of a new prison governor with particularly radical ideas. His ideas are essentially based upon trying to challenge and change the perceptions of officers and the authorities and to recognise the needs of prisoners (both sex and violent offenders) at Peterhead, despite their crimes. By doing this, the perceptions and knowledge of the 'other' are being scrutinised and the legitimacy of these perceptions questioned in relation to security and safety for staff.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is particularly apparent in terms of 'G' hall and violent offenders:

"I am attempting to address the needs of those prisoners on 24 hour lock-down. At the end of the day we have to think of staff safety on the one side so that there may be occasions when some people require that for a period. We can't always treat them with kid gloves because the staff have to be protected, but it is a totally horrendous way of dealing with people and it is unacceptable to me and I don't see it as being justifiable and I don't think a year or six months. I mean days, a couple of weeks at the most. How we get round it is another issue. It's not to be tackled head on because we know from predecessors things were quiet for a while and then they had to have protective clothing. We have to create options, and alternatives. The majority don't require it so what you have to do is to allow staff to make judgements whether they are in danger or not". Gov1 Peterhead

It is evident how this 'flight' premise to safer environments, and therefore spaces, is problematic. In requesting to serve their sentences in a protected environment, prisoners tend to short-change themselves in relation to the lack of rehabilitation programmes available at Peterhead. They are effectively 'locked-up' and 'locked-in' to the system, restricting their future movements (whether it be a move towards release, or to serve a new and unrelated sentence) due to the stigma of being confined in Peterhead and for concern over their present situation. This has important implications not only for the manner in which they serve their sentences, but also for the prison authorities in having to accommodate prisoners' long-term requirements. As Toch (1992) summarises:

"Protective custody is an escape vehicle that can backfire. It can be a sanctuary from which there is no return, or a short term solution at the cost of long term social consequences" (p.273).

In Scotland, this problem is recognised in a paper commissioned by the SPS, 'Vulnerable Prisoners in Scotland'. It establishes the need to reflect upon the different types of offenders on protection, their lengths of sentences, offences committed and reasons for requiring protection. The containment of a diverse range of offenders has obvious implications for the effectiveness of protection and so the need for a more direct and channelled approach is signified. The report concludes by suggesting a reflection on:

"the categorisation of vulnerable prisoners, on the use of protection as a response to vulnerability and on the range of services that require to be made available" (p.89).

In essence, a person-responsive approach is necessary at Peterhead, based on accessing information on the individual prisoner and determining his requirements - introducing a three-dimensional focus on the individual rather than what may be perceived as an undefined and sometimes arbitrary 'label and shift' approach, where the prisoner is perceived more as a problem to the mainstream than as an individual requiring a therapeutic form of intervention. Such involvement will have important connotations for the role of the prisoner and more importantly the role of the officer in the future. Views and methods of control will be challenged. The need to communicate on an individual basis and offer help in a more psychological fashion will



have obvious implications for the spatial strategy currently endorsed by the prison authorities. By segregating sex offenders and the vulnerable, a pool of stigmatised victims are being created, effectively reproducing the 'beasty' stereotypes and encouraging bullying in the mainstream.

Such maltreatment has an obvious effect - the stronger elements in the mainstream seem to perceive such a geographical shift of these offenders as a victory, and a subsequent personal assertion of autonomy over their own space and the authorities' institutional space (Toch: 1992). In segregating these prisoners, through reaction to the threats of these bullies, and responding to a need for safety for the vulnerable offenders, the authorities are effectively endorsing this victimisation process and more importantly failing to discourage it. In failing to challenge the social prisoner/crime hierarchy in the prison, and by failing to discourage the reproduction of the sex offender stereotype, the authorities dissuade mainstream prisoners from forming better relations with sex offenders.

### **Survival in prison - protection from the 'other' and assertion of the 'self'**

The spatial strategies utilised by staff to regulate day-to-day life in prison have important physical, symbolic and psychological impacts on those prisoners experiencing them. In all the case study prisons, all types of security and control mechanisms have important adverse psychological effects on prisoners. As Toch (1992) emphasises in his study, prisoners suffer from a lack of social stimulation, particularly over weekends when the routine is very much more restrictive than during the week:

There's nothing to do over the weekends. We need more to take our minds off where we are and who we're away from. P2 Cornton Vale

Activity of the body and mind suppresses the productivity of the consciousness whilst alone. Prisoners seek to utilise their time in whatever manner possible. As Toch (1992) emphasises:

"Activity can serve a number of purposes in coping with the environment beyond those of ameliorating redundancy. It can be a release for feelings, can distract attention from pain, or can keep the mind from being concerned with unpleasant thoughts or memories.

Transcending survival needs, activity can provide goals, fulfilment, or scope for creativity" (p.28).

Many prisoners recognise the advantages of a self-help programme initiated by themselves, and aim at alleviating the monotony of their ticking clock. However the monotony of the day is not always the reason for such an approach - several prisoners state how a more determined 'self' has emerged from the 'pains of imprisonment', emphasising how they have decided to channel their energy in a more positive direction, particularly long-termers:

I'm stronger now - more able to cope on my own. I want to learn and do something in a positive way. P3 Peterhead

This new found way seems to have important and obvious implications for the maintenance and survival of the group. Lifers are, in the majority of cases, more liable to make such a decision to fragment themselves from the main body of prisoners and be viewed as 'different' (and inherently individual) and therefore place themselves in a more unchallenging position within the social prisoner hierarchy. In essence, the longer the sentence, the greater the impact it has on the prisoner, determining a need to suppress the effects of time and its accompanying routine and monotony, and to seek a more conscience-oriented approach. This is usually attained through either the adoption of religion, education, or the enhancement of skills:

I want to learn a career and use it to not rob when I get out. I need the confidence to go out there. Ten years is a long time. P1 Cornton Vale

I do a lot of reading about God and that. Reading about religion educates me and helps me pass my time away more quickly. P4 Perth

Following on from this, the relentlessness of routine can have important connotations for the acquisition of time alone and more private space. A more secluded space is just what many prisoners crave - keeping themselves away and maintaining identity with the 'self':

I'm in a Unit of seven. We're a privileged unit and so we can go in our rooms and shut the door. I prefer it that way. It's my cell and I call it my room and I often say I'm off home after work P1 Cornton Vale

Such a reduction in interaction is not merely a psychological trait, but one that also has spatial connotations. Many prisoners attempt to restrict their communication with their peers by isolating themselves in their cells, making a concerted effort to separate themselves from the group:

I like to be alone. I get a lot of privacy what with working here on my own in the library. When the section's opened up I get out of my cell. I spend enough time in there at night when I'm locked up and writing my letter. I don't encourage anybody to come into my cell. That can be perceived as in clandestine meeting. I keep people at bay - my cell is my wee room. P2 Shotts

Prisoners attempt to further seclude themselves by creating a 'sanctuary' (Toch: 1992, p.36) in their cell where they can hide away and read, and in the majority of cases, re-educate themselves:

I like the prison in sections. I like prisons that are modern. You can get away from all the hum-drum of the prison in your unit and your cell. It's more like a hospital ward here. I didn't like the open galleries in Barlinnie. You felt like you were in prison. You can be more private here and get on with reading and stuff. In Barlinnie you come out of your cell onto a gallery in view of a hundred or so guys. P2 Shotts

If I want to study, I need to close my door. It's not possible to get privacy otherwise. P3 Perth

Such a move is not only a shift towards isolation - it is also a spatial 'time out' exercise in which individuals recreate a more relaxed environment or 'niche' (Toch: 1992) in which they can almost be 'themselves', away from the stereotyped identity they are often forced to adopt:

If you go to a unit you're a gangster right? Your activities in the jail and outside and your whole stature has been acknowledged to you by the authorities in that they put you in a place where you can get your telly and others will think they're just giving that all to that guy 'cos he's just violent and he's not co-operating but if we give him all that it will keep him quiet. That's how everybody perceives you...it's not...even guys in the mainstream and even yourself when you come here, know? You think well this is me...I'm a gangster now; I'm in a Special Unit, right...but that quickly goes away...and there's a lot of trauma within yourself about that. But you gradually balance it out and once you do reach that stage you can start thinking about trying to do something with yourself rather than acting out this fantasy about

who you see yourself as. You realise you're now away from it all and you can get on and be yourself alone with no pressure. P1 Shotts Unit

As in this case, this can create friction in the prison (Shotts Unit). In striving to be different and separate and therefore individual, prisoners attempt to opt out as it were, from the prison group. Where interaction and integration plays an important role in the fundamental running of the Unit, such reclusion has important connotations for its social equilibrium. In choosing to be alone, prisoners are viewed as being 'outwith' the prison community and therefore as a social and control problem:

Not every prisoner here wants to get involved. I think part of the learning process here is about finding out that everybody in life has to accept pressures from other sources apart from themselves. The more you get involved here with your own program which we endorse, the less we are going to be on your back and the only way of keeping people out of meddling with you is to be industrious. Gov1 Shotts Unit

In total, the strategy of the Unit is often liable to be more tense and 'edgy' than was originally proposed by the initial aims of the Unit. The behaviour of an individual in such a small social group setting becomes a critical determinant of tension in the Unit:

I've tended to try and confront it a couple of times and I felt myself being isolated as a result of saying "I don't particularly agree with what you are saying" and then gave my reasons. A prisoner is not meant to say that, so this is where I get stuck and frustrated at times you know? Sometimes we need to set up a special meeting or even in a weekly meeting and listen to guys who are trying to work through things, no? And I've tended not to be so...er...questionable and critical but that's too strong a word...I've tended to be not so disagreeable and some of it is really primary stuff you know? It's...like I was there; I knew what was happening there but there's nothing you can do. If you do happen to do something you have to just try to be honest and open in talking about it. It's seen as if you're collecting Brownie Points...you're seen as the same as the authority, but you're not and I get really confused with all that. But if you do happen to sort of come out that group it's hard, know? It's doubly hard...in any unit...you've got the staff on one side...you've got the management, and you've also got your own peer group but in order for you to do anything for yourself, you've got to come out. P1 Shotts Unit

In the larger prisons, this unwillingness to be involved in prisoner politics, proves useful to control-conscious officers. The willingness by prisoners to meet officers half-way in their attempts to maintain control is an obvious advantage for the authorities both spatially and socially:

Most prisoners just want to get on with their sentences and not cause any trouble and get out as soon as possible. They just get on and do what is necessary. It's the strong ones who are the problem and pressure the weak to get themselves involved. PO2 Perth

It is evident once again, how attitudes of officers towards such private behaviour are very much determined by the need for security and constant control over space. An expression of individuality by prisoners, in terms of lethargy in getting involved in the large mainstream prisons, is viewed as advantageous, the attitude being 'one or two less to be concerned about'. In the unit, this 'individuality' is viewed as problematic, inviting confrontation with staff. It is evident how unorthodox responses to the unit environment determines a need for a more probing and effective control mechanism.

In total, such behaviour may be viewed as a personal means of coping by the individual prisoner - choosing to be more private and alone and to get on with serving his/her sentence. Where such privacy is demanded, like is attracted to like. As Toch explains:

"where high-Privacy persons associate with others, they select peers who are similarly oriented and can respect each others' needs for low-stimulus havens"(p.46).

Such association may be viewed as a particular form of coping strategy and occurs in relation to both high and low stimulus individuals. Toch (1992) indicates how such a strategy is inherently a reaction to an individual's own vulnerability within the prison environment. In displaying low resilience to stress, he emphasises how prisoners "create their own responsive worlds" which he refers to as 'niches':

"A niche is a functional sub-setting containing desired objects, space, resources, people and relationships between people....it is seen as a potential instrument for the relaxation of stress and the achievement of psychological equilibrium"(p.237).



In finding and recognising his/her niche, a prisoner effectively slots into a way of life which is easier to adjust to and to cope with. It is a 'sanctuary' where particular times and places are perceived as good or bad, safe or dangerous. The environment in which the prisoner exists becomes specialised for his/her own purpose of existence. Space is not adapted to, per se, but construed and itself manipulated by the individual - itself representative of safety and security. The emphasis placed on the 'self' and a more normalised environment by strategies such as 'Sentence Planning', has provided prisoners with the ability to not only physically manipulate the spaces in which they are restricted (through force - rioting etc.), but also by way of psychological regulation of the "boundaries of the self" (p.247) as an important form of survival.

In all the prisons studied, such attributes are certainly apparent, but in a form which relates to a specific type of prisoner and length of sentence imposed. as will be shown below, in Castle Huntly, Cornton Vale and Peterhead, where prisoners are themselves perceived as 'marginalised' members of the prison community, due to their age (Castle Huntly), gender (Cornton Vale), and their crime (Peterhead), 'niches' seem to be created and controlled in accordance with a group orientation, and often based around similarities in backgrounds. This may be viewed as a natural reaction to such social marginalisation from both within and without the system, the group interaction determining the creation of a 'niche' reliant upon insecurity from both within and without. In many cases, such as Castle Huntly, group interaction bases itself upon lines of the geographical origin of the individual, with orientation lying North of Scotland 'v' South and East 'v' West. In some cases, the creation of a separate and individual 'niche' is necessary for a 'vulnerable' or 'weak' prisoner to remain separate and, more importantly, safe. Aggression becomes geographically-oriented for this reason. Like is attracted to like, individuals selecting to 'hang out' with those they perceive as non-threatening:

You always know somebody from outside. It can be tense here sometimes and you have to stick together. We mainly stick with people you know from before but also it's to do with where you're from. The Glasgow guys tend to mix together and like those from Lanarkshire mix together and so do the Lothian lot. It's like clans. We do mix but

when something happens then they go here and we go there. You have to stick up for your own. P2 Castle Huntly

The long-term 'typical' male prisoner tends to come across as less vulnerable and more willing to be perceived as individual and separate. 'Niches' are created (and more importantly controlled) with more certainty, in an environment which is itself not organised along the lines of vulnerability, as in the case of Peterhead etc. but in relation to the passing of time, in a positive and fair manner. This is perceived as necessary to survive the length of sentence imposed:

You just get on with your sentence - causing trouble doesn't get anyone anywhere. I keep myself to myself. I don't bother others and they don't bother me." P2 Peterhead

In Cornton Vale, the creation of 'niches' is more complex. Places of origin of offenders are not as significant to them as is the need to associate and identify with prisoners who don't pose a verbal threat to them:

I keep myself away from the other prisoners who want to keep having a go. You find your own type eventually but you have to watch who you get in with. P5 Cornton Vale

In sum, the development of these 'niches' is relevant to the spaces in which prisoners are detained and live; the form social interaction adopts between prisoners and officers, and prisoners and their peers within these spaces; and the ability of prisoners to cope in prison, as determined by their own perceptions and past experiences of prison life.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter is essentially an exercise in recognising the need to draw meaning from prisoners' and officers' personal experiences of prison life and appropriate a more person-sensitive approach to imprisonment. The aim is to determine how and why individuals react to and manipulate the environment they find themselves restricted by, both socially and spatially. It has become clear how both prisoners and staff struggle to survive within the confines of the prison, both constantly attempting to legitimise their social

statuses and create personal 'niches' in which to survive. They essentially utilise their own personal micro-environments as perceived by them to be safe and secure. Prisoners use these personal spaces in a practical and psychological way, to exercise social and spatial control and reassert their individuality within the broader spectrum of their own stereotypical 'groupings'.

This chapter has attempted to emphasise the anxieties and tensions relevant to the individual, in accordance with the prison in which they are detained and the socio-environment of that prison. The physical and psychological utilisation of space becomes an important determinant of how individuals feel safe in prison and react to, and cope with the 'pains of imprisonment'. It is evident how any grand generalisation of prisoners' abilities to survive the prison experience serve to catapult the individual prisoner into the realms of obscurity. Such approaches fail to recognise the relevance of the basis of the social culture of the prison and how this forces individuals to territorialise the prison in relation to their own perceptions of a need and strategy for survival.

Throughout this chapter, I have endeavoured to stress the importance of the attitudes of both social groups towards one another and in the case of prisoners, between themselves, and how such attitudes have important implications for the utilisation of space by each group. The inherent need to control one's space forms the over-arching determinant of the divergence in relations between officers and prisoners. For both groups, security of one's own role, status and identity is paramount. Officers consistently emphasise a need to provide security for the public and themselves. Such an approach immediately endorses their role as custodians. The manner in which they implement this security and control ethic is itself linked to officers' underlying and generalised perceptions of prisoners as 'criminals' and mistrust of them, both individually, and as part of a group. It has been established how control in prison is instigated through physical control over the environment. Whether it requires electronic equipment, sturdy doors and walls or mere officer presence, it is evident that the prisoners' physical environment is a psychological medium for control and feeling of safety for staff.

The meanings attached to the physical prison environment by prisoners is, in contrast, a consequence of the need to produce an identity and assert personal control over prisoners' living space. A situation therefore arises where prisoners and staff attempt to control prison space for reasons of asserting their identities and legitimating their positions within the prison social structure. This assertion of control for reasons of the production of an identity is based upon the expected 'divergent' relations in prison, specifically between that of the stereotypical 'screw' and 'criminal'. The manipulation of space accrues to a perceived 'knowledge' of the 'other' based almost entirely on experience, but also rhetoric (prisoners and officers adopt the views and experiences of their peers as personal 'knowledge' and as a means of identifying with their group thereby strengthening its homogeneity of opinion).

Space in prison is therefore socially contested between prisoners and officers, this contestation determining the form of social relations between officers and prisoners. The language of prisoners and staff reproduce these stereotypes along with a socio-spatial awareness which is inherently concerned with survival for the present through the creation of these 'niches'.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Conclusions*

The aims of this thesis have been three-fold. First, to examine the existence of a 'crisis' situation in Scottish prisons today, arising from the incongruencies between material factors and ideological forces. Second, to determine the relevance of the use of space in prison to this 'crisis' and to examine the manner in which space is used both physically and psychologically by prisoners and staff. Third, to analyse the role of the current strategy 'Sentence Planning' as a means of linking the needs of prisoners and staff to the resources and spaces available and to counter this 'crisis' situation. My research has revealed that 'Sentence Planning' is perceived by prisoners as a strategy aimed at acquiring a greater degree of control over them by encouraging them to be more open with staff and thereby providing staff with more intimate knowledge of the 'other' in prison. The strategy's recognition of the potential of the individual prisoner to help produce this control, has produced a reorientation of the meanings attached to the 'other' by each group, due to the requirements of the 'Sentence Planning' strategy for prisoners and officers to develop trusting relations and be 'open' with one another. This shift towards a more 'open' approach requires a reassessment of prisoners' and officers' knowledge and experience of one another in conjunction with a reorientation of the meanings attached to the physical and social spaces of the prison. This has created a 'crisis of legitimacy' for the prisoners and officers in these establishments, resulting from a need for prisoners and officers to re-evaluate perceptions of themselves and the 'other'. Through the requirements of 'Sentence Planning' to re-evaluate these perceptions, prisoners and staff essentially lose their sense of knowledge of the 'other', together with their perception of their own roles and statuses within prison. The 'known' becomes the 'unknown'. The safety of this knowledge is thus replaced by fear and insecurity.

In order to address the aims outlined above, and to therefore initiate a new dialogue specifying the importance of the use of space and spatial strategies for studies of penalty, I have accessed the opinions, interpretations and experiences of prisoners and staff, examining the extent to which these



opinions differ, and recognising the importance of human agency in manipulating the wider structural spatial and control strategies in prisons. Here, the thesis has attempted to achieve an in-depth study of the social relations in prison between prisoners and officers, as a means to gaining an insight into prison life from the point of view of those who exist at its frontier, (the prisoners and staff in the establishments). The need to understand the incongruities between these social groups and the spatial strategies they use and reproduce, is paramount in order to avoid generalisations about prison life, which merely tend to reproduce the stereotypical 'prisoner' and 'officer' distinctions within a prison 'void'. As social scientists we are often too willing to accept these labels without appreciating why such stereotypes exist at all, who the people are who exist behind them and more importantly, why they are perceived by those they affect as necessary. In total, I have attempted to reassess studies in penality and to encourage the development of a new sociology of imprisonment which is both physically and psychologically 'spatially sensitive'. Such an approach acknowledges the spatial strategies at work within the confines of the prison. These strategies are themselves reproduced through human interaction and help to structure and reproduce the nature of social relations between prisoners and officers. An approach based on exploring the structure of human relations and actions of human agents within and through space in prisons, has important implications for the development of a new socio-spatial dialogue in prisons - one that is three-dimensional and evolved in a three-dimensional form based around theory, methodology and policy. These wider ideological and practical issues will be used to structure a final overall analysis of my findings.

## **METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND EMPIRICAL OBSERVATIONS**

### **Accessing the 'other'**

In order to meet the aims of my thesis, it was necessary to access the opinions of prisoners and staff in as much of their natural environment as possible - the prison establishments. The methodology chapter highlights the varying problems experienced in attempting to fulfil this aim. However, despite the bureaucratic and interpersonal difficulties I encountered, a rich source of data

was tapped to expose the opinions and interpretations of the prisoners and staff within the establishments. I was provided with an opportunity to access the 'other' in prison - to see them not only within the prison environment, but to speak to them on a one-to-one basis and to gain an insight (if only as a snap-shot in time) of them as human beings with feelings, thoughts, experiences and memories.

In carrying out my study, I adopted an approach which would serve to access the views and perceptions of prisoners and staff and establish the relevance of the use of space in prisons for the development of social relations, prisoners' survival techniques and the implementation of penal policy. I therefore carried out semi-structured interviews in six establishments. Such a prison establishment-based approach to the examination of the social environment in prison was necessary as a means to fully appreciate and understand the factors shaping and manipulating prison lives. From my studies I realised that future researchers in prisons need to recognise differences between establishments according to the category of offender detained; nature of the crimes committed; gender of the prisoners; and the design and location of the establishments, as a means to gaining an in-depth understanding of the specific nature of the social relations and interaction between prisoners and staff in both time and more relevantly space.

My approach to this thesis lead to various 'problems'. The study was restricted by the bureaucratic processes imposed upon me by the Scottish Home Department and prison governors. This limited my access to prisons and conditioned my sampling of prisoners and officers. It also required my questions to be non-confrontational and explains the limited interview time allowed. My approach to this study therefore had to be clearly specified, carefully constructed within a tightly contained structure. I also had to seize every opportunity available to gain access and information. Any future research in prisons must be prepared to account for these restrictions and necessary approaches both personally and financially, as well as in relation to the length of time proposed for the entire study.

The restrictions imposed on the number of interviews I was authorised to carry out in each establishment had important implications for the final

analysis of my data. Large-scale studies have obvious advantages, in that computerised statistical packages (such as SPSS) can be used to generate statistical analyses of findings. Qualitative research packages are also available. In my personal opinion, using these packages for this study would have served to restrict and dilute my data, and lose the true dimensions of prisoners' and staff experiences and perceptions of prison life. I had been provided with a unique opportunity to access prisoners and officers from within the prison. I was not interested in generalising my findings, as the aim of the thesis was to access and interpret the relevance of the role of the individual in prison. The aim of this study was to introduce a fresh approach - a spatial dialogue to the study of prisons and one that was sensitive to difference, locality, individuality and the role of human agency in relation to experience and interpretation within the wider social control structures operating within the establishments.

In introducing a spatial dialogue to discussions on imprisonment, there were obvious limits imposed on myself as the researcher. The use of space and the spatial patterns and struggle which emerged in prison, could not be examined at first-sight, due to the nature of the regime, discipline and control ethic operating in the establishments. My fieldwork therefore relied upon the abilities of respondents to be able to interpret the meaning of questions and explain clearly the manner in which they both manipulate and are manipulated by the physical, social and symbolic spaces of the prison. The reactions of prisoners and staff to questions about their prison lives were therefore very much dependent upon their own personal reactions to the questions posed, and to their perceptions of me as a researcher and the aims of my study. The approaches adopted by future researchers in gaining access to and interviewing respondents therefore need to be clearly defined. Researchers must be aware of the importance of their role in relaxing interviewees; requesting, where possible, for adequate facilities to carry out the interviews (i.e. cells rather than prison governor offices); as well as adequate time to speak to respondents prior to the commencement of the interview. They also must be fully aware of how prisoners' and officers' understanding and perceptions of a researcher's background and gender can have significant implications for the establishment of good relations with interviewees and of the collection of 'honest' and 'open' data. In total, every

stage of the fieldwork process needs to be alert to the constraints imposed on the research by the physical and social environment of the prison.

Despite the problems outlined above, the approach adopted in this thesis enabled me to meet and access the views, experiences and perceptions of prisoners and officers from within six very different establishments and subsequently to develop a spatial dialogue within the current discussions of penalty. However, it is obvious that future research in prisons could be enhanced by adopting a carefully constructed approach, aware of the restrictions imposed personally on researchers and on the manner in which they carry out their work as well as the amount of access they are granted to study in prisons. Any research in prison needs to be particularly sensitive to the relevance of the 'locale' (the establishment) and the restrictions operating from within the prison boundaries, as this will allow researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of those factors which shape prison lives and which therefore determine the nature of the data collected.

Throughout this thesis I have attempted to accentuate the most basic and probably most expected result from my data, that being the incongruities of opinion between staff and prisoners. However basic and expected this divergence in opinion is (as a result of prisoners being detained against their will and expressing obvious disdain of this), it has important implications for the manner in which prisoners and staff exist, live and work side-by-side in prison. The necessity for these differences of opinion is paramount - as a method of legitimating an individual's social standing/status within the prison sub-culture and as a member of the prisoners' and officers' social groups, and identification as a member of the wider society outside of the prison boundaries.

These divergences in opinion between prisoners and staff are important as it is not adequate enough merely to accept such relations or stereotypes as 'expected' and to therefore fail to delve deeper to establish how and why individuals relate to one another within the prison environment. As Toch (1992) in 'Living in Prison' emphasises, it is wrong to attempt to accept and draw meaning from our observations of what prison life is, or how we believe it should be. As he states, prisons are unfamiliar to the majority of us: we

have a limited notion of what living in prison is actually like and where “our experience is no guide, we invoke logic” (p.10). Therefore we assign people in prison as possessing particular motives and capabilities to survive, as a way for us to understand and identify with the ‘prison experience’. When these individuals do not measure up to our expectations, we are dismayed and feel the urge to further generalise about them. In contrast, my data accesses the real-life experiences and interpretations of those individuals working and detained within the establishments. It is not clean-cut uninterpreted data (as already emphasised), but what it reveals is the degree to which we should be willing to examine the social and spatial environment of the prison more closely, rather than to over-generalise as a means to justify our understanding.

My findings highlight the need for strategists in the penal system to recognise the relevance of the roles and needs of the individual in prison. My study signifies the importance of fear to prisoners and officers, the relevance of past experiences of prison and the inherent need for a sense of security for both groups and for prisoners and officers to feel they are able to associate and interact in relative safety, in particular places within the establishment. Most relevantly the research emphasises that security is needed as a means to protect the ‘self’ from the trials of imprisonment. It details the manner in which prisoners and officers assert stereotypical roles when the physical barriers of the prison are not available to protect the ‘self’ from the ‘other’, and in the case of prisoners, to protect the ‘self’ from other prisoners.

The most important issue to be highlighted is the relevance of the layout of the physical spaces of the prison and the categorisation of prisoners detained within the individual establishments (such as the design of Cornton Vale for female offenders and Castle Huntly’s layout with its ‘boundless’ perimeter detaining category ‘D’ offenders. It was not adequate enough to generalise over all six establishments in this study, but to recognise the relevance of the particular establishment as part of a wider system, possessing its own administration, identity and physical attributes (these playing important roles in the development of relations between staff and prisoners).



The existence of a divergence in opinion between staff and prisoners in terms of material factors (facilities available), particularly in relation to design and security of a particular establishment, was apparent. A spatial element was therefore injected into the differences of opinions between prisoners and staff and their respective 'other'. The need for research to identify with particular spaces within the prison and to gain a clear insight into the manner in which these spaces are administered, is paramount. Prisoners and staff in all six establishments voiced opinions on particular aspects of prison life such as regime, security and facilities available as they themselves experienced and perceived them. In all three cases, incongruities between the two groups were established, the basis for such divergences in opinion relating to displays of power and a need for personal control over prisoners' and officers' own social and spatial networks. These differences in opinion were produced as a function of their perceptions of what and who they are as 'prisoners' and 'officers'. In the case of security, control and punishment of prisoners, both groups interpreted these elements of the regime very differently: officers emphasised the advantages and disadvantages of such facilities in relation to their role as 'gate-keepers'; whilst prisoners outlined their personal perceptions and experiences of the regime. In both cases, these interpretations relied upon the experience of segregation and security for either group. Staff were more likely to identify with the physical attributes of the regime and the physical spaces of the prison in an attempt to legitimate their position and role as security personnel and carry out their main task - the control of prisoners. Prisoners were concerned with the more psychological elements of the regime - the meanings attached to its routine and organisation and the experiences emanating from it.

The manner in which the prison regime manipulated prisoners' lives and spaces and how prisoners themselves attempted to manipulate the regime became apparent. Such strategies were implemented as a means of prisoners legitimating their role and status within the prison and, at the same time (and through personal experience), maintaining some form of identity as individuals with a sense of personal control over their own spaces and lives. These group control strategies have important connotations for the devolution of policy in prison (as will be discussed later), emphasising the need for strategists to appreciate the relevance of experience and knowledge

of the regime and the 'other' as an important determinant of group and personal autonomy and to provide an understanding of the manipulation of the control strategies implemented by the authorities.

### **Prison as Experience**

By gaining personal information from staff and prisoners, the day-to-day experience of prison life is expressed not only as an 'experience' for an individual person, but is an example of what life is like from within the confines of the prison and under the influences of the microcosmic social world of the prison institution. By accessing information directly from the prisoner or officer, we are able to gain insight into what life is like in a particular prison establishment, rather than how it should be or how we expect it to be. It is clear that a stark contrast exists between the two and needs to be fully recognised. This thesis therefore endorses a need to realise the potential of the individual to assert him/herself within the structured and routine daily life of prison. It is no longer acceptable to view prisoners and staff as passive recipients of prison regime, discipline and expected social roles, as proposed by Goffman (1968) and his emphasis on 'role dispossession'. Individuals reproduce the social relations by which these structures operate, through language, action and personal experience. But it is important to analyse how and why such a constant divergence of opinion between prisoners and staff continues to exist, inhibiting the development of more productive relationships. Such discord has important implications for the successful implementation of policy, requiring further discussion, as set out below.

In realising the potential of individuals to shape their destiny in the prison environment, this thesis has shown that it is necessary to understand the reasons why prisoners and staff reproduce their stereotypical roles as 'criminals' and 'screws' as a means to survive. Such a requirement is inherently related to the acquisition of an identity in order to exert control over their lives in prison. As emphasised above, the meanings attached to issues of security and regime by both groups reflect how they feel a need to produce an identity and legitimate a position within the prison. In order to do this, both groups revert to their stereotypes of "criminals" and "screws" as

the only way they know how to form and maintain an identity. Prisoners become known to their peers in relation to the crimes committed, (further endorsing the hierarchy within the prisoner culture) and in the case of staff, the length of time employed and their treatment of prisoners. These identities are symbolic of a need to establish identity between groups. Each group recognises and responds to these stereotypes in a manner which has remained the same throughout the history of imprisonment. These stereotypes are essential - they preserve the difference between the groups and maintain a 'knowledge' (understanding and experience) of each other, thereby endorsing a feeling of safety for the 'self'. The 'knowledge' and expectation of how the 'other' will react to particular circumstances, and more importantly how each group perceive one another, acts as a safety mechanism. Prisoners and staff use this 'knowledge' to maintain equilibrium in their own lives in prison. There are no expectations from either group to be any different to what experience in the past has dictated, and it is this experience which constantly serves to reproduce these stereotypes in prison. Both strategies, 'Opportunity and Responsibility' and 'Sentence Planning' have attempted to challenge this phenomena, but as will be summarised later in this chapter, have had a limited impact, resulting instead in the re-assertion of stereotypes and the emphasis on difference and incongruities between the two groups to an even greater extent.

To summarise, having adopted a qualitative approach to studying the spaces of prison life, my key empirical observations are as follows: I have recognised the relevance of the need for an identity in prison for both prisoners and officers. These roles and identities have important implications for the meanings attached to the spaces in prison and the manner in which these spaces are used. My study has emphasised the relevance of an establishment-based approach to research in prison, recognising the differences which arise from the implementation of penal policy, and which shape prison lives, such as: the category of offender, nature of the crime, gender of the prisoner, design and layout of the spaces of the prison and local interpretations of imprisonment by those governing establishments and working with prisoners.

My research has highlighted the differences in opinion between prisoners and officers with regards to security and the operation of regimes in prisons, and how these different interpretations are linked to the assertion of power and need for personal control over prisoners' and officers' own lives, as a means to legitimate status in prison, avert fear and create a feeling of security and safety in prison.

I have also recognised the importance of the assertion of the stereotypical roles of 'deviants' and 'screws' by prisoners and officers respectively, as a way of legitimating their status in prison. In relation to prisoners, these stereotypes are endorsed as a means to protect the inner identity and true character of individuals (the 'self') from attempts by the prison authorities at de-personalisation and role dispossession. Staff adopt these roles as a means to assert authority as custodians and protect their 'self' from challenges from the 'other' (prisoners). In perceiving the 'other' in this stereotypical manner, I have shown how prisoners and officers are able to maintain a form of knowledge of the expected behaviour of the 'other' and therefore produce a feeling of control and security for themselves in prison.

In the next section, I consider some implications of these findings for theories of penalty.

## **THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Knowledge equals Power**

Knowledge of the 'other' is useful as an instrument of power. Each group uses this knowledge of the 'other', as 'criminal' or 'screw', to gain a feeling of control for the 'self', as a means to protect the 'self' from the 'other'. In being knowledgeable of one another, both groups feel secure and therefore in control of their own situations. The layout of the prison is utilised as an expression of control and the power struggles associated with it. The spaces in which prisoners and officers commonly exist are used as a type of psychological battlefield where stereotypical role-plays are acted out (the dining rooms, the visiting areas and the workplaces). Particular moves produce particular responses by the 'other', in most cases the expected

responses which reassert the roles of 'deviants' and 'screws' and continue to re-legitimize their positions within the prison culture.

This behaviour requires a shift in approach to prisons and prison life. It is no longer adequate, as emphasised above, to take for granted assumptions about categories of life within prison establishments. The tendency to accept the stereotypical characters of prisoners and officers emanates from the perception that because prisoners are kept in prison against their will, their attitudes will be confrontational and require a particular form of strict regime and approach from officers. This is no longer sufficient.

The need to understand fully where these stereotypes emanate from and why they are so necessary is paramount. Sykes (1958) in 'Society of Captives' attempts to do this in his analysis of the mechanisms of 'total power' in prisons and his study of the 'rats', the 'punks', the 'ball busters', the 'gorillas' and the 'hipsters'. His approach informs us to some extent of the different types of prisoner stereotypes, but rarely goes beyond them. His analysis of 'total power' in Trenton Prison, New Jersey concludes that this 'total power' can only be implemented by officers working in close proximity to prisoners and 'trading' with them (see Chapter I). Sykes introduces a description of the need for assertion of control over space by staff, through collusion with the 'other' and therefore presents a form of break-down of the officer stereotype as 'custodian'.

However, Terence and Pauline Morris (1963) recognise that, although the stereotyped 'criminal' and 'screw' still exist in conversation and approach, in practice, each group comes in a variety of forms. Not all prison officers are overtly concerned with 'pushing' and punishing prisoners, and not all prisoners are 'uncooperative'. As they state "Pentonville...is a prison in which apathetic attitudes are quite fantastically confused" (p.14). Once again, a predisposition with space and 'individuality' is emphasised, in terms of the nature of social relations between particular prisoners and officers within particular times, spaces and situations.

It is therefore necessary to gain further insight into the interpretations of prisoners and staff of each other by attempting to grasp an understanding of



those factors which produce these interpretations, particularly the relevance of individuals' experiences of prison life, whether it be personally, or as experience accumulated from information from others. It is not sufficient to put such differences of interpretation down to prisoners' and officers' disquiet with the system. In most cases prisoners and officers exist side by side without confrontation. Such generalisation merely skates over the real issues, failing to appreciate the manner in which past experience affects the present abilities of individuals to exist contentedly side-by-side, and more importantly cope with prison life.

As Toch emphasises in *Living in Prison* (1992), the manner in which prisoners cope in prison is linked to an individual's own sense of well being, safety and stress. It is not something which can be assumed from the crime committed or sentence passed. The ability of an individual to cope within a confined space and under a restricted regime is bound up with his/her ability to adapt to changing circumstances and ways of life. Such adaptation is inherently tied up with an ability to create an inhabitable and comfortable existence within the confines of the everyday - in this case the prison. Toch refers to this as a responsive world - a 'niche' or "microcosm that rarely guarantees happiness but usually guarantees survival" (p.236). Such a survival technique is itself defined through interpretation by an individual of his/her surroundings, accumulating information about the environment and determining how secure it makes that individual feel. These 'niches' are inherently "transactional" and "congruent" (Toch: 1992; p.238-239) with a prisoner's interpretations and requirements. The data from the six establishments illustrates three consequences of the tendency of individuals to respond psychologically to the prison environment: one, the perceived need to forge an identity; two, the relevance of experience as a determinant of the prioritised needs of the individual; and three, the relevance of space to the development of niches (the manner in which the meanings attached to space, construed from past experience of social interaction between prisoners and officers and prisoners and prisoners, both shape and determine the development of these coping strategies). For example, dining facilities are perceived as spaces of contestation and fear by both prisoners and officers, whilst in most prisons, cells are perceived to be safe and secure places for prisoners by both groups. Prisoners' psychological response to the utilisation

and manipulation of space by the authorities has important implications for our understanding of the development of social relations in prisons between prisoners and officers, in that this form of response places emphasis on the abilities of individual prisoners to use their sense of safety and knowledge (produced from past experience), as a way to enhance a sense of control over their own lives and the spaces in which they have to live. Power and control therefore develops from the ability of individuals to acquire knowledge from experience. This 'knowledge' is used by prisoners to serve their sentences as safely as possible, to maintain and protect their own identities and to enhance their feelings of self-worth as individuals.

### **Forging an identity**

The stripping of an individual's identity (role dispossession - Goffman: 1968) on entering prison and the view of him/her as one of many, seems to redirect the responsibility of maintaining a degree of individuality onto the prisoner, based on who he/she was prior to entering prison. No longer is the individual given the physical and psychological freedom to be outwardly 'individual'. Such individuality is interpreted as 'difference', and invites a response from both prisoners and staff. It is no longer safe to be 'oneself' in prison - it is merely adequate to keep one to oneself for fear of reprisal.

In keeping to themselves, prisoners are forced to maintain an identity unto themselves - the extent to which this 'incognito existence' is deemed necessary seems to be heavily reliant upon an individual's interpretation of their social environment and the degree of stress he/she experiences when interacting with it. Prisoners choose to control their social boundaries in accordance with the extent to which they are able to tolerate the environment they interact with. They may therefore be viewed as possessing the ability to transform their social setting as they feel it necessary, in order to exist in relative safety. In doing so, they form their own 'niche' over which they have ultimate control, defending the 'self' from point contact with the environment and thereby forging an individual identity. The spatiality of the 'self' becomes significant, the individual simulating carefully monitored movements (both physically and psychologically) as a means of maintaining identity and a sense of autonomy over the 'self' within a secure and safe environment. The

'niche' becomes essentially a survival technique used to exist outside of the control ethic of the prison as an individual and as a means to protect the 'self' from the 'other'.

### **Experience and the 'Spatiality of the Self'**

This section argues that the relevance of experience (through both observation and hearsay) has to be recognised within a prison establishment. As the data have shown, on entering prison people do not lose their powers of interpretation or their sensitivities. They have chosen to step outside of the laws imposed by society and have been caught. In being restricted in a small, confined space in prison and under a strict regime, an individual's powers of awareness of the environment they find themselves in become concentrated and heightened. Being in a new, different environment with different social and spatial networks, they are more disposed to listen, observe and react carefully, with greater consideration for their own safety and preservation of the 'self'. This may be viewed as a spatial outcome of imprisonment - prisoners cannot significantly change their environment to suit their needs by putting distance between themselves and what, and who, they perceive as stressful. They do not possess the ability to react and run, as is the option available to those people outside of the prison system. Their spatial restrictions produce a need for greater spatial awareness. Moves to segregation cells become significant, safe and private retreats - retreats from the physical confines (security, control and monotonous regime) and the cultural confines (the prisoner hierarchy) of the prison.

This research shows how the authorities realise the impact that a physically and psychologically stressful environment has on prisoners and the way in which prisoners and officers utilise this to their own advantage. The removal of prisoners to purpose-built cells, serves to segregate disruptive individuals from the main body of prisoners. Here space is effectively used as a deterrent to further disruption within the prisoner group and as a punishment against the individual prisoner concerned. Once again an incongruity of opinion is apparent between staff and prisoners, with prisoners classing such a shift in their physical environment as a progression up the hierarchical ladder. To serve time in the 'Digger', is to raise a prisoner's profile and it is here that we

must recognise the relevance of a change of environment to prisoners and their own sense of status. The transition to a new, safe and secure 'niche', such as the segregation cell, raises a prisoner's status in the prison social hierarchy and is essentially viewed as a place where control and identity can be elevated and preserved.

This leads on to my next point - that it is important to identify with the manner in which an individual's response to his/her environment is closely monitored and observed on the introduction of 'Sentence Planning'. In viewing prisoners as 'responsible' individuals, as part of a wider prison system, the strategy heralds a fresh, investigative approach to social relations in prison. It highlights a need for the individual prisoner to take responsibility for his/her actions, providing opportunities for personal choice and self-improvement during the length of the sentence.

This emphasis on the consciousness of the 'self' to pander to the whims of the authorities in return for the progression through an already overcrowded system to better and more comfortable facilities, is, on examination of this progressive system, mistrusted by prisoners. On reflection, it is clear how the 'Sentence Planning' strategy utilises the manner in which prisoners create 'niches' as a survival technique to etch out and preserve their personal identities to its own advantage. The strategy does this by using officers to listen to prisoners' needs and provide them with an opportunity to air their views. It may also be seen to recognise the limits of these 'niches', in encouraging prisoners to re-evaluate their approaches to prison life - to not merely base this approach upon fear of the unknown and insecurity, but to be more open, both socially and therefore spatially (in terms of themselves, challenging and changing the meanings attached to the spaces of the prison produced from past experience and hearsay).

Nevertheless, access to this personal information is not merely an attempt to identify with prisoners' needs. As this thesis has shown from the opinions of both prisoners and staff, it is also perceived as a method of effective personalised control in the prison for and by the authorities. Personal Officers invite individuals to relay information about how they are coping with prison life and therefore attempt to further strip away an identity an individual

prisoner has managed to acquire. It is essentially viewed as an attempt to gain access to knowledge of the 'other' from within, by fragmenting group identity and a sense of 'safety in numbers' and by exploiting prisoners by attempting to relate to an individual prisoner's identity and to gain an understanding of his/ her ability to cope in prison. This has subsequently proven to place further stress upon prisoners, forcing them to internalise their feelings even more and to respond to the prison environment in a greater defensive and inhibited manner, by adopting stereotypical roles in order to protect the 'self' from this challenge.

As is apparent in all prison establishments, the need to fragment the prisoner group recognition is paramount for the authorities when perceived by them as being threatening to security and adverse to control. 'Sentence Planning' is viewed as an attempt to accentuate the importance of the individual and 'dissolve' the power of the group. It is here that emphasis is redirected towards the individual, the authorities choosing to identify with the prisoner as one of many or as one alone whenever necessary. It is evident how prisoners themselves respond to the environment as a means of reasserting identity, legitimating social standing and endorsing a more secure existence, whilst the authorities (management and officers) respond in a similar manner, in an attempt to reassert control over space and therefore prisoners. This power struggle needs to be fully realised if any real attempt is to be made in the development of better social relations in prison and a more trusting environment. It is where this struggle is being fought that I will now turn: to the internal spaces of the prison.

### **Space - the final frontier?**

This thesis has established the relevance of space (the meanings attached to it as both a physical and psychological barrier) to prisoners' and officers' day-to-day existence in prison. Space manipulates and is manipulated by both staff and prisoners as a form of personal and group power and as a means of legitimating social status, thereby justifying the social roles of 'prisoner' and 'officer'. It has important connotations for the development of social relations between prisoners and staff and can therefore not be ignored if any real



progress is to be made in creating a more trustworthy prison environment which is no longer 'crisis'-oriented.

As emphasised earlier in this thesis, the physical boundaries of the prison (and the meanings attached to these boundaries for the express reasons of security), signify incongruities of opinion between the two social groups. This indicates a need to acknowledge the divergence between these two social groups in order to implement a secure yet acceptable spatial boundary within which both groups can exist. Officers constantly emphasised the relevance of the physical aspects of the prison establishment, its layout and design, as indicators of security and legitimisation of their own power as gate-keepers. In most cases the physical barriers were perceived as a back-up to the officers' own roles and feelings of control within the internal spaces of the prison. They did not underestimate their own control over space and therefore prisoners, but recognised that without strong physical perimeters of the prison establishments, they would not be able to implement this control as effectively. A degree of tension was certainly apparent within these institutions, where the physical aspects of imprisonment were either perceived as being too lackadaisical (as in Castle Huntly for Category 'D' offenders, where staff felt their own autonomy to be ineffective because of the trust placed in the young offenders not to escape from a physically boundless prison establishment); or in Shotts Unit where security was so effective, staff often questioned their own role in such a relaxed environment where prisoners were allowed to live within a relatively normalised environment and to mix with staff in comfort.

What becomes apparent from this, is the extent to which the existence of any type of physical security immediately has meanings attached to it, which in turn affect its capability as a form of security. These perceptions are themselves shaped by officers' attitudes to prisoners and by the extent to which they relate to offenders as 'criminals' or 'deviants'. It is these attitudes which need to be confronted head-on if any progress is to be made in qualifying an officer's 'custodian' role and sense of control, without the need to revert to the physical boundaries of the prison as backup. Such an approach would produce a greater reliance based upon more effective social relations and trust, rather than the physical concrete boundaries of the prison.

This issue is further complicated by more of a psychological approach from prisoners. Prisoners' attitudes towards security and observatory techniques particularly were very much linked to how these control factors make prisoners feel. A great deal of resentment was apparent where prisoners felt security was too tight, and too concerned with what prisoners may do, rather than what they were doing at the present time. Prisoners recognised that the authorities' expectations of them were low and this subsequently made them particularly sceptical of any attempt by the authorities to make changes, and implement the ideological shift towards the responsible prisoner, thereby improving the prison environment. This was particularly apparent in Cornton Vale, where attitude was 'gender', as well as 'deviant' oriented (see Chapter VII).

### **Space as Power**

The research provides evidence of how a divergence in interpretation between prisoners and officers affects the social relations between them and the manner in which prisoners and staff manipulate prison space for the acquisition of control over the environment. It was evident that prisoners and staff required a feeling of control over personal space in order to re-establish some form of individuality and identity and to endorse a sense of self-worth to their existence. The anxieties and tensions of living in prison not only produced a need for the development of a transitional world or 'niche', but furthermore determined a need to territorialise in order to survive. The 'niche' therefore effectively spatially skews prisoners' social spaces. Prisoners choose to adopt stereotypical roles, or their own personal identities, in particular spaces, as dictated by their own interpretation of how stressful a situation or environment is, and their assessment of their need for the protection of the inner 'self', and therefore, their true identity.

This is particularly evident in relation to protection prisoners, who have chosen to relocate away from family and friends in an attempt to create a safe and secure environment away from those who are willing to harm them because of the crime they have committed. The social hierarchy in mainstream prisons, where prisoners who have committed sexual crimes are deemed as evil and 'beasts', dictates a need for them to be segregated.

Protection prisoners therefore adopt this strategy, locking themselves further away from their own outside spaces of the prison (particularly in relation to where Peterhead is situated in the north-east of Scotland), and locking themselves into the system, the stigma of serving a sentence in Peterhead being sociologically damaging in the long-term. The need to assert control over one's personal space becomes paramount and serves to show how the acquisition of control and a sense of self-worth is necessary wherever possible and under whatever conditions (segregation, protection or within a mainstream establishment), in order to maintain some form of dignity as an individual in prison.

It is thus evident that, on attempting to manipulate the spaces and environment prisoners inhabit, prisoners are themselves manipulated spatially. This is not only physically, in the sense of security and regime issues, but also psychologically in relation to the labels attached to prisoners on entering prison, with regards their crime, sentence, gender and behaviour. Prisoners are not passive recipients of punishment, and neither are they so restricted that they are not provided with an opportunity to reassert themselves as individuals. What needs to be realised is how the social relations between prisoners and officers and prisoners and their peers (relations between prisoners and staff from all different backgrounds and with very different ways of coping), dictates prisoners' sense of vulnerability, fear, need for safety, protection and control, and consequently, a particular spatial awareness. It cannot be put down to one factor alone and as will be explained towards the end of this chapter, a multi-faceted approach is therefore necessary in order to understand better the manner in which prisoners, staff and the authorities interact with the prison environment within particular establishments.

Drawing the main points of this section together, it might be said that the key theoretical achievements of the thesis are as follows: One, to look beyond the stereotypes of prison life and appreciate the fuller identity of the individual prisoner and member of staff; Two, to recognise the existence and differences between the physical, social and symbolic spaces of the prison; Three, to recognise the relevance of coping strategies used by prisoners and the creation of 'niches' in Scottish prisons - social and spatial survival techniques

used to produce a sense of security for prisoners, as a means by which they can forge an identity; Four, an understanding of the development of these 'niches' for maintenance of a sense of control in prison for prisoners, and the manner in which the authorities inherent need for security and control manages to skew the meanings attached to the physical and social spaces of the prison for prisoners; Five, and most importantly, to heighten awareness and understanding of the 'geographies of dispersion'; to emphasise the relevance of the 'locale' and the particular differences between spaces and the contexts in which they exist and are used, but to go further by extending this Foucauldian approach to develop an understanding of the nature of the roles of those individuals detained and working in prisons and the manner in which their actions and perceptions serve to shape and manipulate prison space. This approach may be viewed as an attempt to develop further ideas of the 'locale' as "substance ridden things" (Foucault: 1977) where individuals relate and interact in the restricted confines of the prison and at the same time manipulate, reproduce and respond to these spaces as a reaction to their own feelings, perceptions and experiences of prison life. This thesis has therefore attempted to develop an approach which is responsive to the actions and perceptions of the individual prisoners and officer; of both the weak and the strong within prison and the manner in which the 'tactics' of the weak and the 'strategies' of the strong are used to assert feelings of control and individual identity and to therefore protect, secure, and challenge fear of the unknown and known for both prisoners and officers.

I now go on to examine the implications of the empirical and theoretical contribution of the research to aspects of penal policy.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Sentence Planning - a break-through or break-down of the prison culture?**

The manipulation of space both physically and psychologically by the prison authorities for the express aim of producing a more effective regime and tighter control has already been acknowledged. Chapter V established the impact of the 'Sentence Planning' strategy on prisoners and officers, particularly the impact of the shift towards endorsing the idea of the

'responsible' prisoner. Such a strategy, as suggested in the text, has important implications for both the manner in which prisoners are perceived by the authorities and staff and the subsequent impact it has on meanings attached to the spaces used in prison.

In the first instance, 'Sentence Planning' has required the adoption of an ideal - a prisoner who is able and willing to appreciate and acknowledge responsibility for his/her actions, prior to, and during serving his/ her sentence. This is certainly a progressive approach for the prison system, but one which has had important implications for the way in which prisoners and staff have been forced to redefine their own interpretations of the 'other' in prison. Viewing prisoners as 'responsible' and 'individuals', involves providing the prisoner with a greater opportunity to have a say about the way he/she serves a sentence. As is evident from the data, many of the officers found this difficult to identify with, in that the strategy required a re-interpretation of prisoners as the 'other' (a 'criminal') and a re-evaluation of officers' knowledge of how prisoners respond in particular situations, and who they actually are, underneath these stereotypes. In effect, 'Sentence Planning' indicates a need for officers to eradicate images of the stereotype prisoner with which so many have learnt to identify, as a means to attempt to improve their sense of security and control in prison.

The changes in attitude involved in proposing the adoption of the idea of the 'responsible' prisoner, requires a greater sensitivity to, and awareness of, the prison's social environment by future strategists. This will help in gaining a clearer appreciation of the impact of such a strategy on officers' personal interpretations of prisoners; on the shift in emphasis required in their own roles from 'gate-keepers' to 'counsellors', and will, more importantly, require in-depth training of officers in order to encourage the strategy's successful adoption.

In the second instance, the notion of using space to accommodate this strategy has been fully realised. The authorities have not only recognised a need to re-establish the idea of the progressive system on a prison-wide scale, but have furthermore aligned this approach with emphasis on a greater awareness of the spaces outside of the prison - the prisoner's community and family. In



externalising responsibility, thereby recognising the prisoner as being part of a family and a community, and encouraging prisoners to view themselves in this way, as a means to make them feel a certain sense of responsibility towards those relatives and friends outwith the prison walls, the authorities have introduced the strategy in an attempt to encourage prisoners to serve their sentences with the minimum of trouble and to get released quickly from prison in order to be with these relatives. Further evidence of this 'encouragement' is the promise of progression through the prison system as part of a structured sentence plan, towards better facilities and a greater number of privileges.

This 'carrot and stick' approach has been severely hampered by a lack of resources and space to implement it successfully, as well as an overall sporadic implementation. This has resulted in an increase in scepticism amongst both staff and prisoners and reassertion of the original stereotypes accorded each other. It has produced a limited breakdown in social relations between the two groups. Thus an attempt to harness and manipulate space both physically, (through the provision of a progressive system and better facilities) and psychologically, (through the idea of a progressive system towards the final move to a compliant community), has merely resulted in an intensification of the very culture which the strategy attempted to challenge.

Furthermore, the implementation of 'Sentence Planning' has reasserted a need for prisoners to generate security within individual 'niches'. Prisoners have become more aware of and attached to, their surroundings, because of the explicit fact that the strategy has failed to shift prisoners through the system as efficiently as originally promised. Scepticism and the fear of the unknown increases fear within the known, thereby redefining a need for a more environmentally aware 'niche' and a psychological restriction of personal space by prisoners. As will be examined below, this is further intensified by the implementation of the 'Personal Officer Scheme' and the storing of information by officers. Without a proper understanding of the consequences of such an approach and the impact it would have in terms of either success or failure, this outcome has to be expected and acknowledged for future reference.

The relevance of space within the prison system, particularly the manner in which it is manipulated by the authorities and prisoners (both physically and psychologically) as a means of asserting control and legitimating their individual roles as prisoners and officers, is evident from the above. The need to realise the importance of the social organisation of the prison establishment to this striving for power is apparent, as is the subsequent impact it has on the manner in which space is used. As Sykes (1958) indicates, the need to recognise and empathise with the autonomy of the 'meaningful social group' (p.16) is paramount, as within it exists a system of values linked to the maintenance of group solidarity and cohesion. Without taking full consideration of this 'cohesion' and the 'system of values', the successful implementation of any strategy is questionable without enforcing it outright. 'Sentence Planning' has gone some of the way to recognising and pandering to the whims of this group cohesion through an attempt to implement better communication channels between staff and prisoners. Despite the scheme's practical difficulties, it is evident how the Scottish Prison Service has at least taken a step in the right direction. It has attempted to implement a regime where prisoners are given an opportunity to indicate their preferences to officers as to how they would like to serve their sentences; to have their views accessed and, has at least gone some of the way to realise the relevance of experience and social interaction in prison, which acts as a determinant of how life and space in prison is manipulated physically and psychologically. The Scottish Prison Service therefore merely needs to refine its aim.

### **Communication - the way forward?**

'Sentence Planning' exists as an important step forward for the SPS. It is attentive to the creative and charismatic qualities of individuals, and more importantly their ability to draw meaning from experience and psychologically reproduce and adjust to the prison culture and environment. The need for interpretation of how individuals cope in prison is expressed through attempts by the strategy to access these coping networks - to become a medium through which individuals can express concern. The strategy thereby acknowledges prisoners' needs to assert themselves within the prison environment in their own way, as a personal attempt by them to maintain identity and more importantly, survive the prison experience.

Such an approach has introduced a need to recognise, and more importantly utilise, effective communication channels between the two social groups. It is one thing verbally to endorse an approach which intends to establish communication channels from staff to prisoners, (as a way of providing information) and to recognise the views of those detained and the issues directly concerning them, but quite another to implement it. In being responsive to the requirements of prisoners, the strategy has introduced a fresh outlook; one aimed at listening rather than merely observing and accepting. The strategy has attempted to break down barriers between prisoners and staff and to herald a more caring and responsive manner, this itself requiring a different 'social positioning' of prison officers and prisoners to that of observing and coercing, as was apparent before 'Sentence Planning'.

The strategy recognises the relevance of time and place to prisoners within the system, particularly in relation to the length of time they are away from their families and friends and the distance at which they are placed from them. It may be viewed as a process aimed at encouraging offenders gradually to reduce the distance between themselves and the 'outside' world. 'Sentence Planning' has sought to utilise its form of 'spatiality' to its advantage by providing prisoners with an opportunity to plan their sentences and progress through the system. It has endeavoured to provide prisoners with the scope to feel as though they are going somewhere - towards the gate and the spaces outside it. By placing significance on the places outside of the prison, the strategy encourages prisoners to realise the impact their imprisonment has on their relatives and encourages a need to be more attentive to those relations and spaces outside. As was established earlier on in the thesis, this is not done solely through longer visits and better facilities as perhaps would be expected, but is implemented psychologically, in relation to encouraging prisoners to view their time in prison as not wasted, but as a period in which they can reflect on their behaviour, learn from the prison experience and use resources to a productive end (in the form of acquiring new skills and re-education).

Ideological similarities with the endorsement of the 'Separate System' in Pentonville prison in the 19th century are apparent in relation to how prisoners are coerced by the authorities to see the errors of their ways. What

must be recognised here however, is the one express difference between 'Sentence Planning' and the 'Separate System'; the physical spaces and boundaries of the prison are not being forcibly utilised as a means of making individuals see the errors of their ways, through hard labour and squalid working and living conditions. Prisoners in Scotland today, are being psychologically coerced, the system encouraging them to improve social relations between staff and prisoners, to use their sentences effectively, and progress quickly through the system. 'Sentence Planning' taps prisoners' reservoirs of knowledge, perceptions and experiences of the culture and the environment and attempts to use these to implement an equilibrium of power between prisoners and officers, providing prisoners and officers with a more open arena in which to express views and break down social barriers. Such an approach is certainly sound in relation to recognising the role already played by prisoners in manipulating the implementation of policy in prison. But as will be emphasised below, the practicalities of such a scheme are complicated, requiring further consideration of the manner in which the strategy has been implemented and the consequence of it.

### **Sentence Planning - challenging the prison culture.**

The 'Sentence Planning' strategy has had a wide ranging impact for prisoners and staff alike. It has endeavoured to challenge the perceptions and interpretations prisoners and staff have of one another. In attempting to encourage a more informed identification with one another, the strategy strikes at the heart of the prison 'crisis', attempting to recognise and challenge all that is accepted and known by each group and in turn establishing a new perception, developed around a more informed environment with the installation of better and more trustworthy communication networks. Secrecy and fear has dominated the prison's social and spatial networks throughout time. My research indicates that, to break down this barrier between the two groups requires one, resources; two, trust; and three, and most relevantly, time. I will now deal with each of these in turn. Problems associated with these issues have essentially reproduced the prison 'crisis', staff and prisoners still requiring to legitimate who they are and the role they are expected to and have to play.

- Resources

The initial problem with the strategy has been what has been perceived as a lack of resources to deal with the promises made. As the interim report on 'Sentence Planning' (SPS: 1992) concludes:

"The range of options available to a prisoner is restricted. There are not enough VT courses and full-time education is only an option for a small number of the prisoners. The provision of a range of opportunities is fundamental to sentence planning and to notion of the responsible prisoner. It is hard to see such ideas being successful without the concrete provision of real choices and alternatives." (p.3)

The premise of planning a sentence has very much relied on the material and psychological progression through the system. With a swelling of numbers of prisoners in 'B' and 'C' categories, the authorities have been unable to cope with demand for movements to establishments closer to prisoners' families. This restriction has caused antagonism and scepticism amongst both staff and prisoners, with staff unable to respond and prisoners unable to fully realise their sentence plans. As I have shown, this has particular connotations for those prisoners in Cornton Vale and Peterhead, where stigmatisation according to gender and crime committed, has prevented a full appreciation of the facilities available, due to there being nowhere for these offenders to move to. As was established in Chapter V, prisoners were effectively 'locked up' and 'locked in' to the system.

The need for more intensive staff training throughout the system, geared towards particular establishments and their offenders was particularly apparent. This issue was not raised in the report (SPS: 1992), and at the time was obviously not proving problematic. As it states: "Officers perceive themselves as being able to carry out both the punitive and caring aspects of their jobs." The main problem faced at the time of the report was "a lack of time to carry out sentence planning duties" (p.3). This problem was also highlighted in the report on 'Open Reporting in HMP Shotts' (SPS: 1992). Since completion of these two studies, the evidence presented in this study suggests that it is not so much 'time' that is required by officers, but a need for training in the implementation of the strategy.



- Trust

Furthermore, the documentation of information by prison officers on prisoners' opinions and personal characteristics has produced significant reverberations. My research shows that prisoners have been wary of such a strategy, regarding it to be a control mechanism by the authorities aimed at gaining more intricate information on prisoners and noting the manner in which they are managing to cope with their sentence and any significant changes in their approach to prison life. Similar findings are presented in the SPS report on 'Open Reporting in HMP Shotts' (1992). Prisoners apparently felt obliged to participate in the scheme, in order to be seen as 'responsible' for purposes of gaining early parole:

"Prisoners gave a degree of praise to sentence planning in relation to the Personal Officer system. The idea of open reporting was less well received. The perceived necessity to participate in the overall scheme for parole purposes was seen as contradictory to the spirit of openness and the possibility of choice from a list of available alternatives.....Some prisoners felt they could rely on their officer not to pass on information, whilst others perceived their officers as attempting to encourage 'grassing' during their contact periods. As far as communication was concerned, there was consensus that officers were being prevented by security, from giving reasons and explanations for particular outcomes of prisoner requests." (para 8.9 and 8.10)

As established earlier, the need to remain an 'individual' and forge a personal identity in prison is paramount and necessary to survive. 'Sentence Planning' has been perceived by many as an attempt not only to acknowledge the existence of these 'niches', but furthermore, to identify with them and utilise this individuality as a means of making the prisoner concerned identify with and become responsible for his/her own actions within and without the spaces of the prison.

The strategy is not necessarily an absolute attempt to break these identities, but to manipulate them to its own ends - to remove the need for secrecy and a secure 'niche' in which prisoners choose to exist by identifying with this need for security and the influence that stress and fear of the unknown has on prisoners. In essence, the scheme aims to encourage the prisoner to become more reliant on the authorities and less individualistic in his/her approach to

prison life. The role of the individual becomes central to the aim of 'Sentence Planning' - encouraging responsibility for a prisoner's actions and identifying with that individual as someone with varying abilities to cope, at the same time restraining this individualistic tendency for reasons of increased control.

Such a restrictive approach to identifying with the individual prisoner removes the threat of the 'group', (which in the past has proven unrestrainable), thereby allowing more personal and effective regulation by officers over prisoners. In doing so, the strategy has effectively questioned the trust element between the two social groups in prisons. This is due to the way in which the strategy requires a shift in how prisoners and staff perceive one another. It essentially requires experience and knowledge of the 'other' to be ignored, and for the discarding of stereotypes as they are recognised and known. As the SPS report on HMP Shotts concludes, there is a definite need "to break-down the divide in cultures which exist in prison" (SPS: 1992; p.30). As is apparent in earlier chapters, prisoners and staff are being requested to re-legitimate their roles as they know them. Staff are more and more required to adopt a caring and counselling approach to prisoners, whilst prisoners are encouraged to perceive staff and particularly officers as social workers with an express intention of helping them through their sentences. As is evident for my research, this approach certainly seems relatively 'alien' to both prisoners and officers, and as established in the next section, is something which has to be realised as requiring a major ideological shift in thinking for those at the frontier of the prison system (the staff and prisoners), and consequently a greater deal of encouragement, training, resources and time if any such progress is to be made.

- **Time and Patience**

The aims of the strategy 'Sentence Planning', need to be fully qualified if any real progress towards its successful implementation (and subsequent full acceptance by prisoners and officers) is to be made. It is not adequate to assume that prisoners and staff alike will be willing to adopt such a radical shift in thinking so quickly, though it is fair to say that this has certainly not been completely expected by the strategy. What is clear is the fact that there is an absolute need for more in-depth research as to the relationship between

prisoners and in terms of how they perceive the ideologically and practically different approach to imprisonment, introduced as a result of the aims of 'Sentence Planning', and the expected impact it will have. Limited attention seems to have been paid to the relevance of social relations already existent between the two groups, when it is exactly this which the strategy is attempting to transform and improve.

The mere acceptance of a divergence of opinion and generalisation across all Scottish prison establishments as to the form and intensity this divergence takes, (regardless of the type of offenders, their categories, places of origin, coping abilities and opinions of prison life), has sought to disable the strategy's intentions. As is apparent from my interviews with staff and prisoners, initial implementation of the strategy has been sporadic, due, not only to a lack of resources, but to the ineffectual manner in which it has occurred. A lack of attention is evident in consideration of those prisoners who are situated outside the normal (male, category C and D) stream. They have nowhere to progress to and as emphasised earlier, are further locked into and restricted by a system which is promising a 'carrot' of more and better resources, progression through the system and the opportunity for prisoners to plan ahead. Such ignorance has bred much contempt by prisoners for a system which they already view as inadequate.

### **The establishment of a community in prison**

The basic premise of providing what is promised and within a particular time-frame is absolute, if any form of trust and re-establishment of a new, more informed stereotype of the 'other' is to be introduced and accepted. It is, however, important to realise the need for such stereotypes, as a means of protecting the 'self' from the 'other', and maintaining a knowledge of the 'other' in order to experience a sense of control over one's existence in prison. This need will never be completely eradicated, due to the experience and knowledge of those imprisoned and employed in prison. The definitive aim of the strategy should be to challenge this experience and knowledge; to remove the secrecy behind the walls of the establishments and to attempt to make the prison experience a lot more edifying.

More resources are necessary for the quality training of prison officers - not merely a broad sweep training, but an approach which is establishment based, encouraging officers to promote a feeling of mutual respect and a more equal form of power, between prisoners and staff within that establishment. Such respect can only be introduced by the officers themselves, due to the fact that prisoners are detained against their will, and subsequently see no reason to justify a respectful approach to imprisonment or staff, when they are actually being punished. Teething troubles are therefore expected. To implement successfully this strategy requires resources, time and patience and an express need to realise the impact of such expectations within the prison establishments. Prison officers are what may be termed the 'ambassadors' of the SPS. They work at the frontier and consequently require significant backup in order that 'Sentence Planning' can succeed.

Officers should also be made to recognise how their own legitimization of their roles as officers and 'gate-keepers' need to be challenged. It was established in Chapter V how officers recognise the effect 'Sentence Planning' is having on their prison role - the requirements of the uniform are now more involved, the need for a readjustment of perceptions of their own personal role and opinions of those they seek to detain, being essential. Without attending to this basic premise, limited progress will be made. Some research has been completed in this field (SPS: 1992; Wozniak et al: 1994). More informed research as to the overall impact of 'Sentence Planning' on both prisoners and officers is required, within the individual establishments.

Effective communication networks can only be established when and where there is a realisation by both groups that such interaction will be of use and more importantly implemented on a level footing. In Shotts Unit it is evident how such communication networks are in place in a small working environment where officers and prisoners are allowed to inhabit the same spaces simultaneously. There is still a way to go here, but the basis of trust has been established within a community environment, where, most importantly, prisoners and staff are allowed to be (to certain degree), 'individuals'. Here stress does not determine a survival technique - trust and open communication does. The need for smaller community units or groups must certainly be looked into, as it is within these that a successful "getting to

know you" approach can be implemented, its aims being made much clearer and a real opportunity to develop some form of 'community' being provided.

More importantly, 'Sentence Planning' cannot be and should not be viewed by the authorities as a control ethic - it does not render the individual prisoners passive, stripping away any form of identity he or she has managed to achieve and maintain. Implementation of the strategy and reaction to it has proved this - the need to identify closely with the opinions and interpretations of prisoners and officers remains central to the cessation of a 'crisis' situation in the Scottish prison system. The social order within the prison is manifest through the actions and perceptions of the individuals who work and who are detained there. It is constantly recreated through experience, perception and knowledge, and, until this basic fact is acknowledged and researched thoroughly in relation to particular establishments, then limited progress will be made in establishing the success in implementing a control equilibrium between staff and prisoners, effective and open communication channels and a trustworthy environment in prison.

## **A NEW DIRECTION**

In accessing the views of the 'other' and in obtaining a snap-shot of life in prison in relation to the culture and implementation of current policies, this study has highlighted the need for a more informed approach to imprisonment and the impact it has on prisoners and staff. It is no longer ethical or practical to accept or adopt the expected, stereotypical, social divergence between these two groups. A multi-faceted approach, endorsing the idea of the manipulation of structure (authorities' social and spatial organisational strategies) and human agency (prisoners' personal social and spatial tactics) established by Garland (1991) and Cavadino and Dignan (1992), is required. The endorsement of a humanistic approach is necessary, recognising the potential of the creative and charismatic individual with his/her abilities to relate to his/ her stresses and fears within the prison environment, to extract meaning from experience, and to maintain identity, stability and a sense of security through the use of 'niches' (Toch, 1992). Putting these principles together with the practicalities of my findings, it is



possible to identify the following implications for future research and overall policy implementation:

- A phenomenological approach to imprisonment, accessing the views of prisoners and staff as a way of preventing long-term social consequences of policy insensitivity;
- Awareness of the need for stereotypical roles in prison for both prisoners and staff, as a means to protect the identity of the inner 'self' from the 'other' and present to the 'other' an ability to cope against the trials of imprisonment;
- A sensitivity towards the individual, acknowledging his/ her abilities to cope in prison and shape their own microcosmic world or 'niche' in order to survive;
- Emphasis on the role of stress and fear of the unknown in prison as a determinant of the production of these 'niches';
- A sensitivity to the relevance of space for prisoners and staff in terms of the places (and times) at which they feel secure in prison;
- Awareness the importance of the meanings attached to the spaces in prison as a result of past experiences and 'hearsay' for prisoners and officers;
- Awareness of the relevance of these meanings attached to spaces in prison in terms of the future development of positive social interaction between prisoners and staff and the establishment of effective and open communication channels;
- More in-depth research within the prison establishments, investigating the social and spatial nature of relations between prisoners and staff;
- More establishment-based research and a greater attention paid to the divergence between establishments (particularly categories of

offenders detained) in relation to the implementation and impact of prison policy;

- A sensitivity towards protection prisoners and female prisoners and the spatial and social restrictions experienced by these minority groups;
- Attention paid to the interpretations of imprisonment by those individuals governing establishments;
- Research geared to simultaneous implementation of policy and evaluation, in order to rectify problems quickly and efficiently;
- The necessary resources to back up policy implementation in order to prevent disillusionment amongst prisoners and staff;
- More external research, unrestricted by over-sensitive bureaucracy, which recognises its susceptibility to interpretation by those providing access and those being researched. This should be tied to an express need to identify with, and be certain of one's own role as a social researcher in prisons.

In short, the need to access the views of prisoners and staff is paramount if we are to understand fully the nature of social relations in prison and more importantly, the relevance of space to the development of these relations. Furthermore, it is necessary to introduce a person-responsive and person-sensitive approach to research in prison: to recognise and identify with the prison social environment as existing, and being constantly reproduced in and through space, and through attempts by individuals to survive the prison experience.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISON GOVERNORS (Male Establishments)

#### THE PRISON

1. In your opinion, how important is prison architecture and design for issues of security?
  - advantages of the design of this establishment?
  - disadvantages of the design of this establishment?
2. How important is prison architecture and design for issues of control?
  - advantages of the design of this establishment?
  - disadvantages of the design of this establishment?
3. Can you identify any design features in this establishment which impact on:
  - regime;
  - relationships?
  - interaction?
4. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for security in this prison?
5. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for control in this prison?
6. Recent disruptions in prisons have determined a close examination of prison regime and the actual use of prison building. Have there been any recent major changes made to the design of the prison as a consequence of this?
  - dining areas/ meal times?
  - recreation facilities/ chapel?
  - visiting facilities?
7. How much freedom do prisoners have in the prison?
8. In a world of restricted expenditure, how important, in your opinion are better facilities for prisoners (i.e.. access to proper sanitation; electricity in cells etc.)?
9. If you could make one change, what would it be?
10. How easy is it to get to the prison for prisoners' family and friends?
11. What arrangements are currently available for visitors and families?

12. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
- workplace?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
13. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
- environment?
  - over-crowding?
  - media issues (television, newspapers)?
  - copycat?
14. How are special needs offenders dealt with in this prison spatially?
- Mentally ill offenders?
  - HIV / AIDS?
  - Drug offenders?
  - Sex offenders?
15. Are there special programs/ places available for them?

## **PUNISHMENT IN PRISON**

16. How do you deal with prisoners who present a threat to the running of the prison? - Is there a progressive system of punishment?
17. What happens when you have exhausted all available options for punishment?
18. How many prisoners this year have been downgraded and separated from other prisoners?
19. Once prisoners are segregated, where and generally for how long?
20. What staff are involved in the administering of punishment in the prison?
21. In your experience, how successful are the different forms of punishment on the behaviour of disruptive prisoners?
- downgrading/ loss of privileges?
  - increase in severity of regime?
  - a change of physical environment?
22. Do these above punishment forms all have the same kind of affect - do they all aim to limit future disruptions or are there other benefits?



## ISSUES THREATENING THE ORGANISATION OF THE PRISON

23. Are there/ have there been problems of overcrowding in the prison this year?
24. Are there any prisoners sharing cells in the prison at this moment in time?
25. Have there been any associated problems with overcrowding i.e.. a more disruptive atmosphere in the prison threatening security and control?
26. Has the prison experienced problems of wilful damage?
27. If so, have any changes been made to design of the prison/ prison regime to prevent these?
28. Have there been any recent disturbances in the prison in relation to:
  - single acts?
  - group disruptions?
29. As far as you could gather from the situation, what were the reasons for the disturbances? (Distinctions between immediate precipitants and underlying causes).
30. What are your views on allowing prisoners to associate in large numbers?
31. How are prison officers trained to deal with disturbances?

## SENTENCE PLANNING

32. In your opinion, what are the implications for available resources, utilisation of space in prisons and the design of the prison with regards to sentence planning?
33. How difficult is it to balance issues of security and control with the idea of the prisoner as a responsible individual allowed to make his/ her own decisions?

## PRISON AS PUNISHMENT

34. What do you perceive the role of the governor to be in the Scottish Prison Service?

35. The strategy plan 'Opportunity and Responsibility' conveys the belief that the SPS is explicit about the end of 'treatment' as the purpose behind imprisonment. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?

- deterrence?
- rehabilitation?
- punishment?

36. Do you feel prison prepares people for release into society?

34. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well being of prisoners that is different from other forms of punishment i.e.. fines, Community Service etc.?

37. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental well-being?

38. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well-being of Prison Officers?

39. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental/ physical well-being?

## GENERAL COMMENTS

40. Are there any changes you would like to see implemented in the prison system as a whole with regards to

- the design of prisons?
- prison regimes?
- segregation of prisoners?

41. Have you seen the recommendations made in the Woolf Report? If yes, what are your views on these recommendations with regards to:

- prison design (i.e. smaller units and community prisons)?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

42. What are your views on the recommendations made in 'Opportunity and Responsibility' with regards to:

- prison regime?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

43. What are your views on the privatisation of the prison system with regards to issues of design of prisons, provision of facilities and security and control?

## QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISON GOVERNORS (Female Establishment)

### THE PRISON

How long have you been in the prison service and what other prisons have you served in?

1. In your opinion, how important is prison architecture and design for issues of security?
  - advantages of the design of this establishment?
  - disadvantages of the design of this establishment?
2. How important is prison architecture and design for issues of control?
  - advantages of the design of this establishment?
  - disadvantages of the design of this establishment?
3. Can you identify any design features in this establishment which impact on:
  - regime;
  - relationships?
  - interaction?
4. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for security in this prison?
5. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for control in this prison?
6. Recent disruptions in prisons have determined a close examination of prison regime and the actual use of prison building. Have there been any recent major changes made to the design of the prison as a consequence of this?
  - dining areas/ meal times?
  - recreation facilities/ chapel?
  - visiting facilities?
7. What type of prisoners are kept here?
  - crimes committed?
  - Are they all similar emotionally etc.?
  - Are they of a similar type of background (family, kids, money, area, jobs)
8. How much freedom do prisoners have in the prison?
9. What kind of work/ training/ education is available here?
10. In a world of restricted expenditure, how important, in your opinion are better facilities for prisoners and to prisoners (i.e.. access to proper sanitation; electricity in cells etc.)?

11. If you could make one change, what would it be?
12. How easy is it to get to the prison for prisoners' family and friends?
13. What arrangements are currently available for visitors and families?
14. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
  - workplace?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
15. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
  - environment?
  - over-crowding?
  - media issues (television, newspapers)?
  - copycat?
16. How are special needs offenders dealt with in this prison spatially?
  - Mentally ill offenders?
  - HIV/ AIDS?
  - Drug offenders?
  - Sex offenders?
17. Are there special programs/ places available for them?

## **WOMEN IN PRISON**

18. How often can women's children visit them?
19. If a baby is born while the mother is serving a sentence, how is the baby cared for?
  - (a) within the prison?
  - (b) outside the prison?
20. What in your experience are the main worries for women in prison?  
and How can these worries be reduced?
21. What kind of help is given to women for finding accommodation and a job when they leave prison?
22. different for those attendant upon men's imprisonment?
23. Do you think that women in prison require different types of regimes to those usually followed in men's prisons?

24. Would you like to see a change in the way women are treated in prison?

## **PUNISHMENT IN PRISON**

25. How do you deal with prisoners who present a threat to the running of the prison? - Is there a progressive system of punishment?

26. What happens when you have exhausted all available options for punishment?

27. How many prisoners this year have been downgraded and separated from other prisoners?

28. Once prisoners are segregated, where and generally for how long?

29. What staff are involved in the administering of punishment in the prison?

30. In your experience, how successful are the different forms of punishment on the behaviour of disruptive prisoners?

- downgrading/ loss of privileges?
- increase in severity of regime?
- a change of physical environment?

31. Do these above punishment forms all have the same kind of affect - do they all aim to limit future disruptions or are there other benefits?

## **ISSUES THREATENING THE ORGANISATION OF THE PRISON**

32. Are there/ have there been problems of overcrowding in the prison this year?

33. Are there any prisoners sharing cells in the prison at this moment in time?

34. Have there been any associated problems with overcrowding i.e.. a more disruptive atmosphere in the prison threatening security and control?

35. Has/ Does the prison experienced problems of wilful damage?

36. If so, have any changes been made to design of the prison/ prison regime to prevent these?



37. Have there been any recent disturbances in the prison in relation to:
- single acts?
  - group disruptions?
38. As far as you could gather from the situation, what were the reasons for the disturbances? (Distinctions between immediate precipitants and underlying causes).
39. What are your views on allowing prisoners to associate in large numbers?
40. How are prison officers trained to deal with disturbances?

## **SENTENCE PLANNING**

41. In your opinion, what are the implications for
- (a) prisoners;
  - (b) available resources;
  - (c) utilisation of space in prisons;
  - (d) the design of the prison with regards to sentence planning?
42. How difficult is it to balance issues of security and control with the idea of the prisoner as a responsible individual allowed to make her own decisions?

## **PRISON AS PUNISHMENT**

43. What do you perceive the role of the governor to be in the Scottish Prison Service?
44. The strategy plan 'Opportunity and Responsibility' conveys the belief that the SPS is explicit about the end of 'treatment' as the purpose behind imprisonment. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?
- deterrence?
  - rehabilitation?
  - punishment?
45. Do you feel prison generally prepares people for release into society?
46. Do you feel this prison prepares female offenders for release into society?
47. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well being of prisoners that is different from other forms of punishment i.e.. fines, Community Service etc.?

48. Do you think this differs from men's prisons?
49. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental/ physical well-being?
50. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well-being of Prison Officers?
51. Do you think this differs from men's prisons?

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

52. Are there any changes you would like to see implemented in the prison system as a whole with regards to
- the design of prisons?
  - prison regimes?
  - segregation of prisoners?
53. Have you seen the recommendations made in the Woolf Report? If yes, what are your views on these recommendations with regards to:
- prison design (i.e. smaller units and community prisons)?
54. What are your views on the recommendations made in 'Opportunity and Responsibility' with regards to:
- prison regime?
  - provision of prisoner facilities?
55. What are your views on the privatisation of the prison system with regards to issues of design of prisons, provision of facilities and security and control?

## QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISON OFFICERS (Male Establishments)

### THE PRISON

How long have you been in the prison service and what other prisons have you served in?

1. In your opinion, how important is prison architecture and design for issues of security?

- advantages of the design of this establishment?
- disadvantages of the design of this establishment?

2. How important is prison architecture and design for issues of control?

- advantages of the design of this establishment?
- disadvantages of the design of this establishment?

3. Can you identify any design features in this establishment which impact on:  
regime;  
relationships?  
interaction?

4. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for security in this prison?

5. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for control in this prison?

6. Recent disruptions in prisons have determined a close examination of prison regime and the actual use of prison building. Have there been any recent major changes made to the design of the prison as a consequence of this?

- dining areas/ meal times?
- recreation facilities/ chapel?
- visiting facilities?

7. What type of prisoners are kept here?

- crimes committed?
- Are they all similar emotionally etc.?
- Are they of a similar type of background (family, kids, money, area, jobs)

8. How much freedom do prisoners have in the prison?

9. What kind of work/ training/ education is available?

10. In a world of restricted expenditure, how important, in your opinion are better facilities for prisoners and to prisoners (i.e.. access to proper sanitation; electricity in cells etc.)?

11. If you could make one change, what would it be?
12. How easy is it to get to the prison for prisoners' family and friends?
13. What arrangements are currently available for visitors and families?
14. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
  - workplace?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
15. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
  - environment?
  - over-crowding?
  - media issues (television, newspapers)?
  - copycat?
16. How are special needs offenders dealt with in this prison spatially?
  - Mentally ill offenders?
  - HIV / AIDS?
  - Drug offenders?
  - Sex offenders?
17. Are there special programs/ places available for them?

## **PUNISHMENT IN PRISON**

18. How do you deal with prisoners who present a threat to the running of the prison? - Is there a progressive system of punishment?
19. What happens when you have exhausted all available options for punishment?
20. How many prisoners this year have been downgraded and separated from other prisoners?
21. Once prisoners are segregated, where and generally for how long?
22. What staff are involved in the administering of punishment in the prison?
23. In your experience, how successful are the different forms of punishment on the behaviour of disruptive prisoners?
  - downgrading/ loss of privileges?
  - increase in severity of regime?
  - a change of physical environment?

24. Do these above punishment forms all have the same kind of affect - do they all aim to limit future disruptions or are there other benefits?

## **ISSUES THREATENING THE ORGANISATION OF THE PRISON**

25. Are there/ have there been problems of overcrowding in the prison this year?

26. Are there any prisoners sharing cells in the prison at this moment in time?

27. Have there been any associated problems with overcrowding i.e.. a more disruptive atmosphere in the prison threatening security and control?

28. Has the prison experienced problems of wilful damage?

29. If so, have any changes been made to design of the prison/ prison regime to prevent these?

30. Have there been any recent disturbances in the prison in relation to:

- single acts?
- group disruptions?

31. As far as you could gather from the situation, what were the reasons for the disturbances? (Distinctions between immediate precipitants and underlying causes).

32. What are your views on allowing prisoners to associate in large numbers?

33. How are prison officers trained to deal with disturbances?

## **SENTENCE PLANNING**

34. In your opinion, what are the implications for available resources, utilisation of space in prisons and the design of the prison with regards to sentence planning?

35. How difficult is it to balance issues of security and control with the idea of the prisoner as a responsible individual allowed to make his/ her own decisions?



## PRISON AS PUNISHMENT

36. What do you perceive the role of the governor to be in the Scottish Prison Service?

37. The strategy plan 'Opportunity and Responsibility' conveys the belief that the SPS is explicit about the end of 'treatment' as the purpose behind imprisonment. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?

- deterrence?
- rehabilitation?
- punishment?

38. Do you feel prison prepares people for release into society?

39. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well being of prisoners that is different from other forms of punishment i.e.. fines, Community Service etc.?

40. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental well-being?

41. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well-being of Prison Officers?

42. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental/ physical well-being?

## GENERAL COMMENTS

43. Are there any changes you would like to see implemented in the prison system as a whole with regards to

- the design of prisons?
- prison regimes?
- segregation of prisoners?

44. Have you seen the recommendations made in the Woolf Report? If yes, what are your views on these recommendations with regards to:

- prison design (i.e. smaller units and community prisons)?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

45. What are your views on the recommendations made in 'Opportunity and Responsibility' with regards to:

- prison regime?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

46. What are your views on the privatisation of the prison system with regards to issues of design of prisons, provision of facilities and security and control?

## QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISON OFFICERS (Female Establishment)

### THE PRISON

How long have you been in the prison service and what other prisons have you served in?

1. In your opinion, how important is prison architecture and design for issues of security?

- advantages of the design of this establishment?
- disadvantages of the design of this establishment?

2. How important is prison architecture and design for issues of control?

- advantages of the design of this establishment?
- disadvantages of the design of this establishment?

3. Can you identify any design features in this establishment which impact on:  
regime;  
relationships?  
interaction?

4. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for security in this prison?

5. What advantages/ disadvantages does this have for control in this prison?

6. Recent disruptions in prisons have determined a close examination of prison regime and the actual use of prison building. Have there been any recent major changes made to the design of the prison as a consequence of this?

- dining areas/ meal times?
- recreation facilities/ chapel?
- visiting facilities?

7. What type of prisoners are kept here?

- crimes committed?
- Are they all similar emotionally etc.?
- Are they of a similar type of background (family, kids, money, area, jobs)

8. How much freedom do prisoners have in the prison?

9. What kind of work/ training/ education is available?

10. In a world of restricted expenditure, how important, in your opinion are better facilities for prisoners and to prisoners (i.e.. access to proper sanitation; electricity in cells etc.)?

11. If you could make one change, what would it be?
12. How easy is it to get to the prison for prisoners' family and friends?
  - What arrangements are currently available for visitors and families?
13. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
  - workplace?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
14. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
  - environment?
  - over-crowding?
  - media issues (television, newspapers)?
  - copycat?
15. How are special needs offenders dealt with in this prison spatially?
  - Mentally ill offenders?
  - HIV/AIDS?
  - Drug offenders?
  - Sex offenders?
16. Are there special programs/ places available for them?
17. How often can women's children visit them?
18. If a baby is born while the mother is serving a sentence, how is the baby cared for?
  - (a) within the prison?
  - (b) outside the prison?
19. What in your experience are the main worries for women in prison? and How can these worries be reduced?
20. What kind of help is given to women for finding accommodation and a job when they leave prison?

## **WOMEN IN PRISON**

21. Do you think that imprisonment for women involves problems which are different for those attendant upon men's imprisonment?
22. Do you think that women in prison require different types of regimes to those usually followed in men's prisons?

23. Would you like to see a change in the way women are treated in prison?

## **PUNISHMENT IN PRISON**

24. How do you deal with prisoners who present a threat to the running of the prison? - Is there a progressive system of punishment?

25. What happens when you have exhausted all available options for punishment?

26. How many prisoners this year have been downgraded and separated from other prisoners?

27. Once prisoners are segregated, where and generally for how long?

28. What staff are involved in the administering of punishment in the prison?

29. In your experience, how successful are the different forms of punishment on the behaviour of disruptive prisoners?

- downgrading/ loss of privileges?
- increase in severity of regime?
- a change of physical environment?

30. Do these above punishment forms all have the same kind of affect - do they all aim to limit future disruptions or are there other benefits?

## **ISSUES THREATENING THE ORGANISATION OF THE PRISON**

31. Are there/ have there been problems of overcrowding in the prison this year?

32. Are there any prisoners sharing cells in the prison at this moment in time?

33. Have there been any associated problems with overcrowding i.e.. a more disruptive atmosphere in the prison threatening security and control?

34. Has the prison experienced problems of wilful damage?

35. If so, have any changes been made to design of the prison/ prison regime to prevent these?



36. Have there been any recent disturbances in the prison in relation to:

- single acts?
- group disruptions?

37. As far as you could gather from the situation, what were the reasons for the disturbances? (Distinctions between immediate precipitants and underlying causes).

38. What are your views on allowing prisoners to associate in large numbers?

39. How are prison officers trained to deal with disturbances?

## **SENTENCE PLANNING**

40. In your opinion, what are the implications for available resources, utilisation of space in prisons and the design of the prison with regards to sentence planning?

41. How difficult is it to balance issues of security and control with the idea of the prisoner as a responsible individual allowed to make his/ her own decisions?

## **PRISON AS PUNISHMENT**

42. What do you perceive the role of the governor to be in the Scottish Prison Service?

43. The strategy plan 'Opportunity and Responsibility' conveys the belief that the SPS is explicit about the end of 'treatment' as the purpose behind imprisonment. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?

- deterrence?
- rehabilitation?
- punishment?

44. Do you feel prison prepares people for release into society?

45. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well being of prisoners that is different from other forms of punishment i.e.. fines, Community Service etc.?

46. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental well-being?

47. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well-being of Prison Officers?

48. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental/ physical well-being?

## GENERAL COMMENTS

49. Are there any changes you would like to see implemented in the prison system as a whole with regards to

- the design of prisons?
- prison regimes?
- segregation of prisoners?

50. Have you seen the recommendations made in the Woolf Report? If yes, what are your views on these recommendations with regards to:

- prison design (i.e. smaller units and community prisons)?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

51. What are your views on the recommendations made in 'Opportunity and Responsibility' with regards to:

- prison regime?
- provision of prisoner facilities?

52. What are your views on the privatisation of the prison system with regards to issues of design of prisons, provision of facilities and security and control?

QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISON PSYCHOLOGISTS (If available for comment)

THE PRISON

1. How important is prison architecture and design for issues of control?
  - advantages of the design of this establishment?
  - disadvantages of the design of this establishment?
2. Can you identify any design features in this establishment which impact on:
  - regime;
  - relationships?
  - interaction?
3. In a world of restricted expenditure, how important, in your opinion are better facilities for prisoners (i.e.. access to proper sanitation; electricity in cells etc.)?
4. How easy is it to get to the prison for prisoners' family and friends?
5. In your opinion, how important are issues of access to families to prisoners well-being?
6. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
  - workplace?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
7. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
  - environment?
  - over-crowding?
  - media issues (television, newspapers)?
  - copycat?
8. How are special needs offenders dealt with in this prison?
  - Mentally ill offenders?
  - HIV/ AIDS?
  - Drug offenders?
  - Sex offenders?
9. Are there special programs/ places available for them?

## **PUNISHMENT IN PRISON**

10. In your experience, how successful are the different forms of punishment on the behaviour of disruptive prisoners?

- downgrading/ loss of privileges?
- increase in severity of regime?
- a change of physical environment?

10a. Are there other benefits of these types of punishment?

11. In your opinion, what problems does overcrowding cause?

12. Have you witnessed any major disturbances in the prison (i.e.. riots)?

13. If so, as far as you could gather, what were the reasons for the disturbances?

14. What are your views on allowing prisoners to associate in large numbers?

## **SENTENCE PLANNING**

15. In your opinion, what are the implications for available resources, utilisation of space in prisons and the design of the prison with regards to sentence planning?

16. How difficult is it to balance issues of security and control with the idea of the prisoner as a responsible individual allowed to make his/ her own decisions?

## **PRISON AS PUNISHMENT**

17. What do you perceive the role of the Specialist to be in the Scottish Prison Service?

18. The strategy plan 'Opportunity and Responsibility' conveys the belief that the SPS is explicit about the end of 'treatment' as the purpose behind imprisonment. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?

- deterrence?
- rehabilitation?
- punishment?

19. Do you feel prison prepares people for release into society?

20. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well being of prisoners ? (that is different from other forms of punishment)
21. How does the referral system operate in this system?
22. Have you had to deal with any potential suicidal prisoners in this prison?
23. In your opinion, what are the general factors affecting prisoners' mental/ physical well-being?
24. How important do you feel contact with family and friends is to prisoners?
25. What type of prisoners do you mostly have to deal with?
26. What sort of problems do you generally have to deal with?
27. Do you think imprisonment has an effect on the physical/ mental well-being of Prison Officers?

## GENERAL COMMENTS

28. Are there any changes you would like to see implemented in the prison system as a whole with regards to
- the design of prisons?
  - prison regimes?
  - segregation of prisoners?
29. Have you seen the recommendations made in the Woolf Report? If yes, what are your views on these recommendations with regards to:
- prison design (i.e. smaller units and community prisons)?
  - provision of prisoner facilities?
30. What are your views on the recommendations made in 'Opportunity and Responsibility' with regards to:
- prison regime?
  - provision of prisoner facilities?
31. What are your views on the privatisation of the prison system with regards to issues of design of prisons, provision of facilities and security and control?
32. If you could make one change in this prison or the system, what would it be?



## QUESTIONNAIRE - PRISONERS (Male & Female)

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. How long is your present sentence?
2. What were you convicted for?
3. How many times have you been in prison before?
4. If you were to add up all the previous sentences which you have served, about how long have you spent in prison in total?
5. Were you working before you started this sentence?
6. If yes, what was your last job?
  - professional;
  - manual;
  - administrative;
  - academic;
- 7 If no, when did you last have a steady job and what was it?
8. How old are you?
9. Are you:
  - Married?
  - Living as married?
  - Single?
  - Divorced?
  - Widowed?
  - Separated?
  - Co-habiting?
10. Do you have children?
11. How many children?
12. How old are they?
13. Who is looking after them at the moment?
14. How often do you see them?
15. Where were you living before this sentence?

16. In what type of accommodation were you living?
- Own Home?
  - Home owned by someone else but not renting?
  - Local Authority House/ Flat?
  - Housing Association flat?
  - Privately rented house/ Flat?
  - Hostel?
  - Living rough?
  - Other?
17. Are you currently attending a special program in prison?
18. If yes, which one and for how long have you been on it?

## **THE PRISON**

19. Describe a typical day.
20. Do you presently share a cell?
21. How often can you have a shower or bath in a week?
22. How often do you get recreation a week?
23. In your opinion, how important are facilities such as proper sanitation, electricity etc. to the way in which you serve your sentence?
24. How much freedom do you get in the prison i.e.. where and when can you freely associate with other prisoners?
25. How do you feel in prison?
- content?
  - frustrated?
  - isolated?
  - safe?
  - a sense of community spirit?
  - at risk?
26. Is there a type of community spirit in this prison? Is it enhanced by the regime in the prison and the levels of security?
27. What are your views on security in the prison?
- too secure?
  - too controlled?

28. Do you think there are any changes in security necessary?
29. Does your family/ friends experience any problems getting to the prison for visits?
30. What is the most important issue to you in prison/ what would you most like to see changed?
31. In your opinion, is the atmosphere in the prison generally relaxed/ tense?
- workplaces?
  - dining areas?
  - halls?
32. In your opinion, what sort of things affect the atmosphere in the prison?
- environment?
  - overcrowding?
  - media issues?
  - copycat?
33. What are your views on the facilities provided in this prison?
- dining facilities?
  - recreational facilities?
  - visiting facilities?

## **PRISON AS PUNISHMENT**

34. What do you see as the purpose of imprisonment?
- deterrence?
  - rehabilitation?
  - punishment?
35. Do you think it is effective as a method of punishment?

## **OVERALL**

36. Do you think prison has had an effect on your physical well-being and if so, how?
37. Has prison affected your relationships with people outside?/ Other aspects of your life?
38. Do you think prison has had an effect on your mental well-being and if so, how?

39. How do you view your future on leaving prison?
- job?
  - accommodation?
  - family?
40. Do you feel prison prepares people for release into society?
41. Have you been disciplined in prison? If so, what for and how?
- |                      |   |                 |
|----------------------|---|-----------------|
| - downgrading?       | } |                 |
| - segregation?       | } | How many times? |
| - loss of privilege? | } |                 |
42. How did this type of punishment affect you mentally and physically?

### GENERAL COMMENTS

43. What changes would you like to see in the prison with regards to:
- design?
  - availability of facilities?
  - daily regime?
  - segregation?
  - reception?
44. What are your views on Sentence Planning? Has it made any difference to the way in which you serve your sentence and the facilities available to you?
45. If you could change one thing in this prison, what would it be?

## APPENDIX II

### Staff Respondents: Employment Histories in the SPS

	No. of Respondents
Length of time with SPS: 0 - 12 months	1
13 - 36 months	3
37 - 59 months	4
5 - 7 years	4
8 - 10 years	7
11 - 15 years	7
16 - 20 years	6
21 - 25 years	4
Data unavailable	6
Total	42



### APPENDIX III

#### Prisoner Respondents: Personal Characteristics

	No. of Respondents
<b>Length of present sentence:</b>	
Life	6
Discretionary	2
0 - 4 years	11
5 - 9 years	6
10 - 14 years	2
15 - 20 years	2
21 - 25 years	1
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Present conviction:</b>	
Murder	7
Culpable Homicide	2
Assault (including serious)	6
Sexual Offences	5
Robbery (including armed)	2
Drug Offences	8
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Previous convictions (no.):</b>	
0 - 2	23
3 - 5	5
6 - 8	2
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Employment prior to conviction:</b>	
Management	4
Manual sector	7
Service sector	5
Self-employed	4
Unemployed	9
Student	1
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Respondents' statuses:</b>	
Married	4
Living as married	2
Single	15
Divorced	5
Widowed	0
Separated	0
Co-habiting	3
Data unavailable	1
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Place of origin:</b>	
Glasgow	14
Edinburgh	3
Aberdeen	1
Hamilton	1
Blantyre	1
Kelso	1
Perth	1
London	1
Nairn	1
Stirling	1
Ullapool	1
Hastings	1
Data Unavailable	3
Total	30

	No. of Respondents
<b>Type of accommodation:</b>	
Own Home	6
Home owned by someone else but not renting;	6
Local Authority House/ flat	7
Housing Association flat	0
Privately rented house/ flat	6
Hostel	0
Living rough	0
Data Unavailable	5
Total	30

**Attending Specialist Programmes  
in Prison:**

Yes:	Drugs	1
	Psychologist	2
	Anger Control	2
	Alcoholism	1
	No	24
	Total	30

## APPENDIX IV

### **Prisoner respondents: Interview environment**

	No. of Respondents
In-cell	10
Governor office	10
Senior Officer office	10
Total	30

### **Staff respondents: interview environment**

	No. of Respondents
Governor office	22
General staff office	20
Total	42

### **Prisoner respondents: Length of interviews**

	No. of Respondents
20 -30 mins	7
31 - 40 mins	9
41 - 50 mins	10
51 + mins	4
Total	30

### Staff respondents: Length of interviews

	No. of Respondents
20 - 30 mins	18
31 - 40 mins	13
41 - 50 mins	7
51 + mins	3
Total	42



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